

## Scholarship between Europe and the Levant

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Photograph of Alastair Hamilton by Jan Loop

# Scholarship between Europe and the Levant

*Essays in Honour of Alastair Hamilton*

*Edited by*

Jan Loop  
Jill Kraye



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## A Polyglot Traveller in the Republic of Letters

*Jan Loop*

I first met Alastair Hamilton in September 2006 at the Warburg Institute during the presentation of his course for new students, ‘Sin and Sanctity in the Reformation’. I had arrived in London with a fellowship from the Swiss National Science Foundation to work on Protestant Oriental Studies under Alastair’s supervision. I was not expecting much from this one-year stay. Isolated in my field and frustrated by precarious job prospects, I felt that I was on my way out of academia. But enrolling at the Warburg Institute and meeting Alastair entirely changed my perspective. Here was an environment which nurtured a form of scholarship that was deeply aligned to my values. It was independent, source based, interdisciplinary, often arcane and *démodé*, but always devoted to truth and objectivity. And here was a scholar who combined this scholarly tradition with elegance and intellectual clarity and whose work crossed linguistic, cultural and religious boundaries with an ease that cannot but impress and inspire. In the early days of our acquaintance I must have asked him how many languages he spoke. ‘I can work in six’ was his answer—which meant that he is able to publish or to lecture without notes in English, Italian, French, Dutch, Spanish and German. But, as we all know, he also reads numerous other European and Scandinavian languages, can tackle difficult texts in Latin and Arabic, and has taken up other languages such as Coptic, Hebrew and Syriac in order to further his research. It was at the University of Urbino as Professor of English Literature between 1977 and 1988 that he mastered the ability to lecture without notes in order to hold the attention of students who, as he once said, tended to be ‘very young and easily distracted’.

As for scholarly publications, his first work, *The Appeal of Fascism*, appeared in 1971. He was thirty years old and later came to regard the book as a youthful indiscretion. In the mid-1970s, his interest shifted to the early modern period and to the study of religious groups at the fringes of the established, mainstream churches. He developed a particular interest in spiritualist movements of the sixteenth-century in Spain and the Low Countries and contributed pioneering studies to a better understanding of this elusive phenomenon. In addition to a number of articles on Spanish mysticism, Alastair published, in Spanish in 1979, the records of the Inquisition trials of Rodrigo de Bivar and, in 1992, his monograph, *Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth-Century Spain: The*

*Alumbrados*. He also started to produce shorter studies on the *The Family of Love*, a spiritualist movement in the Low Countries, founded by Hendrik Nicolaes, along with a group of defectors, the 'Hiëlists', who followed the path of Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt (Hiël). Their relationship and divisions, as well as the primary individuals involved in this spiritual group, are discussed in a captivating essay from 1977, 'Hiël and the Hiëlists: The Doctrine and Followers of Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt'. Four years later, in 1981, *The Family of Love* appeared, a now classic study of this tolerant movement that reached out to members of all denominations and religions—even to Jews and Muslims. The book 'has the warmth of a bright, clear summer day', wrote Geoffrey Nuttal in his review. 'Gossamer is about and some of it sticks; much drifts on, but either way one is happy. The opportunities for daisy chains seem endless.'<sup>1</sup> And so the daisy chains grew and grew, and interest in this movement has followed Alastair over the rest of his career, leading to a number of shorter essays and two major bibliographical works for the *Bibliotheca Dissidentium*.

These publications show the characteristics that we all admire so much in Alastair's work—the use not only of printed but also unpublished sources, not restricted by any linguistic or geographical limits, an uncompromising sense both of style and historical accuracy, a distaste for the fashionable, and an aversion to method and theory. He uncovers the ways in which intellectual, religious and ideological movements are developed, passed on and preserved in the work of individual actors and so brings microhistory, the history of religious ideas and the history of scholarship into an eloquent dialogue.

Alastair's early academic publications already revolve around some of the leading protagonists and themes of his later work—religious diversity and tolerance, the Christian interest in Near Eastern religious history, early modern printing of Hebrew and Arabic, and the production of polyglot bibles. Christophe Plantin, Jan Moretus, Franciscus Raphelengius, Benito Arias Montano and others played key roles in the *Family of Love*, as did those vibrant centres of early modern intellectual and religious thinking, Antwerp and Leiden. It was in 1985 at Leiden University that Alastair became the first occupant of the Dr C. Louise Thijssen-Schoute chair in the History of Ideas (1985–2005). Having limited teaching obligations, he spent much of his time doing research and travelling between his homes in London, Leiden and Urbino. Two years later he was also appointed Professor of the History of the Radical Reformation (Anabaptistica) at the University of Amsterdam (1987–2001).

The move to the Netherlands coincided with the beginning of what was to become Alastair's main field of research, the history of Oriental and Arabic

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<sup>1</sup> *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 33 1 (1982), 163.



studies in Europe. At Leiden, and in the figure of Frans Raphelengius, son-in-law of the 'Hiëlist' Christophe Plantin, the emerging field of Arabic studies encountered the spiritualist movement that had occupied Alastair for many years. Raphelengius, who was taught and supported by Guillaume Postel, was a founding father of the Leiden school of Arabic studies and the author of an Arabic-Latin dictionary, the first of its kind ever to be printed. The Arabic types with which the *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* was printed in 1613 were the envy of the Northern European Republic of Letters. They brought to Leiden the young William Bedwell, who was looking for ways to print his own dictionary and other Arabic texts. This episode was the subject of Alastair's first publication on the history of European Arabic studies, the 1985 essay 'The Victims of Progress: The Raphelengius Arabic Type and Bedwell's Arabic Lexicon'. It is an innovative study, both of the very beginning of Arabic printing as well as of European Arabic lexicography, to which he would later make many other important contributions. It was followed, in the same year, by his book-length account of the life and work of *William Bedwell the Arabist, 1563–1632*. The next year he published an early assessment of the history of Arabic studies in the Netherlands: the introduction, in Dutch and English, to the catalogue of an exhibition at the Museum Plantin-Moretus, 'Arabic Studies in the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries'.

In the mid-1980s, inspired by Jürgen C.H. Lebram, who was a colleague at the University of Leiden, Alastair started working on apocalyptic and millenarian ideas between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. His contribution to Lebram's *Festschrift* from 1986, in which he discusses Arias Montano's 'spiritualist' commentary on the Book of Revelation, connects his earlier studies on Hiël and the Hiëlists with this new field of research. In the following years, this interest took a clear direction: the reception of the second book of Esdras, one of the apocrypha of the Old Testament which formed part of the Western Bible but were excluded from the Jewish canon. In 1999, just in time for the millennium, Alastair's monograph on the early modern reception of 2 Esdras, with Ezra's vision of the end of the world and the appearance of the saviour, came out. He showed, in particular, how this text was received among radical reformers and dissidents, Anabaptists, spiritualists, Rosicrucians and chiliastic mystics, and thus presented 'a very original contribution to the history of changing religious and scholarly attitudes towards biblical texts; a history in which the woof and warp of the rich intellectual texture of dissent and prophecy in early modern times become clearly visible, to the delight of the reader'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See M.E.H.N. Mout's review in *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis / Dutch Review of Church History* 81:1 (2001), 74–6.

Alastair's work on the history of Oriental studies has never been restricted to European interest in the Islamic world. From the beginning, he was attracted to the connected histories of Eastern Christianity and early modern Europe. One of the first fruits of these studies is an essay on the contribution of Eastern Christians to Western scholarship in Anthony Grafton's 1993 exhibition catalogue *Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture*. It was followed by 'The English Interest in the Arabic-Speaking Christians' and a number of other studies on Arabs who journeyed in Europe, the highlight of which is certainly his account of the fortunes of Abudacnus the Copt, 'An Egyptian Traveller in the Republic of Letters'. Abudacnus is the author of the first *History of the Copts (Historia Jacobitarum, seu Coptorum)*, which was published posthumously in Oxford in 1675 and was for many years a major source of information about the Christian community of Egypt. It was around the time of the publication of this article in the *Journal of the Warburg and the Courtauld Institutes* that Alastair started to develop a particular interest in the Coptic Church and its relation to the West. It culminated, in 2006, in his magistral study of the European discovery of the Egyptian Church, *The Copts and the West 1439–1822*. Even more, perhaps, than his previous publications, this book was the result of years not only of philological, historical and archival work, but also of travels in order to witness places and people with his own eyes, to experience directly and to communicate with people in their own language, and to hear and to read their stories and histories. Egypt has become, over many years, a regular event in his annual cycle of travels. Lodging with his friends Nicholas Warner and Salima Ikram in Cairo, Alastair developed a rigorous routine, often shared with his wife Cecilia, of visiting the Jesuit, Franciscan and Dominican outposts in the city, seeing a small circle of friends, keeping his colloquial Arabic in shape by reading *al-Ahram* and watching Arabic TV channels daily, and walking in Zamalek of an evening. Added to this are regular field-trips to Upper Egypt, usually in pursuit of sites described by early travellers. One of these, whose tracks Alastair followed on his own journeys in Egypt, is Johann Michael Wansleben. The recent edition of Wansleben's Italian travel reports in Egypt and beyond is another testimony to Alastair's intellectual wanderlust. It was partly written during his tenure of the chair of Coptic Studies at the American University in Cairo in 2016.

While Alastair's interests continued to be broad, the study of Europe's relations with the Arabic speaking world occupied the centre of his scholarly work, especially after his move to the Warburg Institute in London in the early 2000s. In 2002, he was appointed to the first S.T. Lee Professorial Fellowship in support of his research on the relations between the Copts and Europe. In 2004, initiated by his old friend Robert Jones and with the active support of the

Warburg's then director, Charles Hope, as well as his predecessor, Nico Mann, he was appointed to the Arcadian Visiting Research Professorship. Alastair has always been a prolific writer, but with his appointment at the Warburg Institute the pace of his scholarly production became awe-inspiring. The collaboration with Robert Jones and the Arcadian Library proved to be particularly stimulating. The first result of this collaboration, in 1993, had been an exhibition at the 'Institut du Monde Arabe' in Paris, for which Alastair wrote the catalogue *Europe and the Arab World: Five Centuries of Books by European Scholars and Travellers from the Libraries of the Arcadian Group*. The catalogue also appeared in French. His *Arab Culture and Ottoman Magnificence in Antwerp's Golden Age*, written on the occasion of the Arcadian exhibition at the Museum Plantin-Moretus in Antwerp from 2001 to 2002, was translated into Dutch and Arabic. In 2011, for an exhibition at the Brunei Gallery at London's School of Oriental and African Studies, Alastair wrote a descriptive account of the more important titles held by the Arcadian Library, *The Bridge of Knowledge*. Every page of this *tour d'horizon* bursts with knowledge and unlocks hidden historical, cultural and intellectual links. With precision and elegance, Alastair turns a list of books into a totally absorbing and interconnected story peopled by a host of characters each one of whom he seems to know intimately. The book was also issued as the seventh volume in the series 'Studies in the Arcadian Library', of which Alastair has been the general editor since its inception. In 2004, the series had been inaugurated with *André Du Ryer and Oriental Studies in Seventeenth Century France*, which he wrote together with Francis Richard. Du Ryer was the author of a grammar of Turkish and the translator of Sa'di's *Gulistān*, one of the finest pieces of Persian literature, but he achieved lasting fame in 1647 as the first scholar to publish a vernacular translation of the Qur'an made directly from the Arabic. Alastair had worked on European encounters with Islam and its holy book before; however, since his study of du Ryer's translation, European dealings with this 'Forbidden Fruit' have become a key focus of his attention. In a number of contributions, Alastair traces known and unknown translations of the Qur'an and, in painstaking analyses of their content and context, uncovers the linguistic, religious and institutional difficulties faced by its early modern European translators.

Although a reluctant participant at conferences, it was on his initiative that two international conferences were held at the Warburg Institute, in 2012 and 2014. They each dealt with different aspects of the long history of European attempts to translate the Qur'an; and both conferences were very well received. Impatient when forced to sit through long-winded and uninspiring papers, Alastair clearly warmed to these highly specialized gatherings that brought together like-minded colleagues and friends. While avoiding the

conference circuit, he has always enjoyed giving lectures, and everybody who has been lucky enough to attend one of his legendary talks, knows that he has raised this form of scholarly communication to new heights—without notes, he turns the history of ideas into captivating narratives and holds the audience in the palm of his hand. In recent years, he was a regular lecturer at the American University in Cairo, the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in Paris, the All Souls seminar series, the University of St Andrews and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. He also gave public lectures, among others, at NYU Abu Dhabi, the Freie Universität Berlin, the University of Geneva and, in 2007, at the Hadassah and Daniel Khalili Memorial Lecture.

When Alastair started to study the work of European Orientalists in the 1980s, he entered a field that, up to then, had received only limited attention. In the last decades, however, inspired by his work, generations of young researchers have followed in his footsteps, enhancing our understanding of the dynamics and processes of cultural and religious exchanges between Christian Europe and the Islamic world. Today, the history of European Oriental studies is an established field, its relevance recognized by numerous publications and international and national grants and research projects.

The editors and contributors hope that this collection of essays is a fitting tribute to Alastair Hamilton's scholarly work and legacy to date.

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Robert Jones also kindly read the proofs of the entire volume, for which the editors would like to thank him warmly, though any remaining errors are, of course, their responsibility.

## Between Literature and History

*Ziad Elmarsafy*

Before he became the well-known historian and specialist of religious history that he is today, Alastair Hamilton's rich and varied career took him to locations that his present-day readers might find unusual, and led to the production of texts that they might find surprising. Perhaps the most important of these is the series of translations from French and Italian that he made in the 1960s and 1970s. The titles and authors translated read like a veritable 'Who's Who' of twentieth-century European literature, biography, criticism and the history of ideas, spanning entire intellectual and political spectrums. A partial list includes Witold Gombrowicz's *Pornografia* (1966) and *A Kind of Testament* (1973), several of Georges Simenon's Maigret novels, Artur London's *Confession* (1968; published as *On Trial* in the UK), Pierre Drieu la Rochelle's late diaries and autobiographical fragments (1973), Lucien Goldmann's *Racine* (1973), Gaspare Giudice's *Pirandello* (1975), Antonin Artaud's mystical writings (1974), Eugenio Montale's *Poet in Our Time* (1976) and Georges Bataille's *Literature and Evil* (1984). The translated material runs the gamut from the staid to the transgressive, and from texts written to inform to ones intended to trouble and transform the reader. How, we might ask, does a mind so occupied with this material make the transition to the reflection on the history of religion that is most frequently associated with Alastair Hamilton's work today? Part of the answer might be found in a theme that spans both parts of his career: the gap between the real and the ideal. It is around this axis that many of his translations and writings of the 1970s revolve. As we shall see, it might also explain the decisive shift in his interests to religious history after 1980. The following essay will trace the operation of that theme in some of his early writings and translations, before proposing a link with his later work and style.

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The gap between ideals and reality drives the work of Pierre Drieu La Rochelle (1893–1945), the French novelist whom Alastair translated and to whose work he wrote one of the finest and wittiest introductions in the English language. Like a number of French novelists during the first half of the twentieth century, Drieu found disenchantment everywhere. So much so that the cause of

disappointment itself sometimes proves disenchanting in his works. One of his signature autobiographical novellas, *Journal d'un homme trompé* ('Diary of a Cuckold'), features a lengthy series of tortured meditations on the narrator's failures and his mistress's putative dishonesty, before concluding, after some fifty pages of self-flagellation, that he might not have been cuckolded after all.<sup>1</sup> Initially, the narrator, Gille, states that he was like a god before his mistress, Nelly.<sup>2</sup> Twenty pages later, almost as a way of ensuring the continuity of dejection, Gille muses that God is a cosmic joker who turns men into women and vice versa.<sup>3</sup> It is no accident that one of Drieu's biographers described him as 'the baffled seducer' ('le séducteur mystifié').<sup>4</sup> In his fictional universe, nothing turns out as it was supposed to. Describing Drieu's suicide and the narrative that preceded it, Alastair writes:

Of the many measures which Pierre Drieu La Rochelle took to ensure his own destruction suicide was the least imposing, the least clamorous, and, in a sense, the least destructive. Despite the exalted idea he presents of it in *Secret Journal* the circumstances in which he killed himself make his death look more like an act of self-preservation than of self-annihilation.<sup>5</sup>

In Alastair's reading, Drieu emerges as a tragic Quixote or Werther, for whom the destruction of the self is really a means to the preservation of the ideal.

The modern novel, many of which Alastair translated, poses similar questions. The central issue in fiction is not, as is often claimed, realism or its absence. It is, rather, the survival of ideals in a non-ideal (i.e., real) world, and the gap between how things were supposed to be versus how they turned out.<sup>6</sup> Although Drieu's *Secret Journal* lies somewhere between fiction and autobiography, it operates along what might be called *romanesque* lines, turning repeatedly to the ways in which the world disappoints and to the themes of illusion and disillusion, while running through the dramatic reversals that have been

1 Pierre Drieu La Rochelle, *Journal d'un homme trompé* (Paris, 1934), p. 57.

2 Ibid., p. 13. The names of the characters are not insignificant as they recur in Drieu's *œuvre* and always as versions of Drieu himself, as in the novel *Gilles*. Frédéric Grover calls *Journal d'un homme trompé* one of Drieu's longest most 'naked' confessions about his sexual life ('une des confessions les plus dépouillées de Drieu sur sa vie sexuelle'): F.J. Grover, *Drieu la Rochelle (1893-1945) : vie, œuvres, témoignages* (Paris, 1979), p. 243.

3 Drieu La Rochelle, *Journal*, p. 36.

4 Dominique Desanti, *Drieu la Rochelle : Le séducteur mystifié* (Paris, 1978).

5 Pierre Drieu La Rochelle, *Secret Journal and Other Writings* [Récit secret, suivi du Journal, 1944-1945, et d'Exorde], trans. A. Hamilton (Cambridge, 1973), p. vii.

6 Thomas Pavel, *La Pensée du roman* (Paris, 2003), has made this case powerfully; but as the publication date makes clear, we cannot assume that he influenced Alastair.

the stuff of Western fiction since its origins. The problem that Drieu encounters is the terminal irreversibility of decline, personal and collective. This leads to key consequences in both Drieu's aesthetics and his understanding of history. Of Drieu the individual's self-indulgent pessimism, Alastair writes, 'It originated in clear-sightedness, but it grew and grew, distorting his vision and frequently rendering him unable to advance beyond the art of caricature'.<sup>7</sup> Drieu the intellectual, who entertained grand ideas about history, 'believed in the Book of History with its neatly written pages telling how one event leads inexorably to another' in a pattern typical of 'certain intellectuals who showed a predilection for totalitarianisms'.<sup>8</sup> It comes as no surprise to learn that Drieu was a fan of Oswald Spengler. On both the individual and historical level, therefore, Drieu always returns, consistently and mechanically, to the familiar loci of decline and disenchantment.

For Drieu, the nature of the ideal that is preserved through self-destruction is manifold. First and foremost, there are the ideals of youth, both in a general and in a personal sense.<sup>9</sup> The worst part of growing old, he says, is accepting limitations ('retranchements'), which, from a youthful, idealistic point of view, would be considered 'monstrous defects' ('de monstrueuses avaries').<sup>10</sup> Reality is retrenchment—limitation. The ideal is the 'oceanic feeling' that exercised Rolland and Freud: going beyond the strictly delimited dualities of our existence.<sup>11</sup> Drieu writes of non-duality as a consummation devoutly to be wished and a cure for anxiety in the *Secret Journal*:

But my sense of anguish disappeared the day I learnt about and began to understand Indian (and Chinese) ideas—the distinction between the self and the Self [*le moi et le Soi*], between life and the essence on the surface of which life is but foam, between being and the beyond of being,

7 Drieu La Rochelle, *Secret Journal*, p. viii.

8 *Ibid.*, p. xix.

9 As in the opening sentence, *ibid.*, p. 3: 'When I was an adolescent I promised myself that I would be faithful to my youth: one day I tried to keep my word.' Drieu's original speaks of being faithful to youth *tout court* rather than just his own: '[J]e me promettais de rester fidèle à la jeunesse': Pierre Drieu La Rochelle, *Romans, récits, nouvelles*, ed. Jean-François Louette et al., Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Paris: Gallimard, 2012), p. 1553 (emphasis mine). As we shall see below, the commitment—and occasional submission—to youth were a key part of Alastair's interests, resurfacing, for instance, in his translations from Witold Gombrowicz, especially the latter's *Pornografia*.

10 Drieu La Rochelle, *Secret Journal*, 3; *id.*, *Romans, récits, nouvelles*, 1553.

11 Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. J. Strachey (New York, 1989), 11-13.

between the divine and the ineffable, between being and not being on the one hand and what is beyond this antinomy on the other.<sup>12</sup>

The war on retrenchment and limitation resurfaces in the work of another writer of a rather different political stripe, and whose work also interested Alastair: Witold Gombrowicz (1904–1969), with whom he was personally acquainted in the late 1960s.<sup>13</sup> In the interviews collected in *A Kind of Testament*, Gombrowicz narrates his war on form and definition as an adolescent regression to infantile narcissism:

I was an agglomeration of different worlds, neither one thing nor the other. Indefinite. If I were followed step by step and spied on, my every contact with people could easily show just how much of a chameleon I was. According to the place, the people, the circumstances, I was good, stupid, primitive, refined, taciturn, talkative, self-effacing, arrogant, superficial, or profound. I was agile, heavy, important, unimportant, bashful, shameless, bold, or shy. What was I not? I was *everything*.<sup>14</sup>

This vision of youth as a moment of omnipotence drives several of Gombrowicz's plots, from *Ferdydurke* to *Cosmos* and beyond. In *Ferdydurke*, a grown man is 'punished' by being sent back to school: effectively an invitation to recreate himself by re-living the 'I was everything' moment. Accordingly, one of the lessons of the novel is that the protagonist (and the reader) cease all identification with any definition or external representation of the self: '*Try to set yourself against form, try to shake free of it*'.<sup>15</sup> So fundamental is this pursuit of formlessness-as-omnipotence that it can be read into the epigraph to the French edition of Gombrowicz's interviews taken from the teachings of Rabbi Moshe Loeb: 'The way through the world is like a razor's edge: on one side there is hell,

12 Drieu La Rochelle, *Secret Journal*, p. 19; id., *Romans, récits, nouvelles*, p. 1567. In her notes to the Pléiade edition of the text, Nathalie Piégay-Gros adds that this is an idea that occurs repeatedly in Drieu's diary: *Romans, récits, nouvelles*, p. 1818 n.

13 Witold Gombrowicz, *Diary*, trans. L. Vallee (New Haven, CT; London, 2012), pp. 717 and 721.

14 Witold Gombrowicz, *A Kind of Testament*, trans. A. Hamilton, 1st US paperback ed., ed. D. de Roux (Champaign, IL; London, 2007), p. 54 (emphasis mine); *Testament : entretiens avec Dominique de Roux* (Paris, 1977), p. 56. Henceforth these titles will be referred to as *Testament English* and *Testament French* respectively. See Rémy Potier's reading of this passage in 'Le « Cas W. Gombrowicz »: L'idéal de la Jeunesse dans l'indifférence des sexes,' *Adolescence* 60, no. 2 (2007), 459–48; 464.

15 Witold Gombrowicz, *Ferdydurke*, trans. E. Mosbacher (London, 2005; repr., 1979), p. 85 (emphasis in the original); id., *Testament French*, pp. 25, 66; *Testament English*, pp. 64–5.



and on the other side there is hell, and in-between the two the way of life.<sup>16</sup> In sum, the way through life is a constant struggle for transcendence between undesirable alternatives.

It would be a mistake, however, to reduce Gombrowicz's aesthetics to the war on form. The pursuit of formlessness is merely one tactic for overcoming the innate 'Formal imperative'—the need to complete and develop incomplete Form—and survival in a universe of irreconcilable forms.<sup>17</sup> Gombrowicz argues that the Formal imperative leads to a situation where ideas and beliefs become 'mere pretexts for the pure pleasure of action', in a manner comparable to Communism and Fascism.<sup>18</sup>

Alastair pursued the appalling consequences of non-duality and the pure unthinking pleasure of action in a more tangible context through his highly original study, *The Appeal of Fascism*. In it, he addresses Fascism's ingredient ideals and fantasies, showing up the history of the movement (if it can be considered a singular movement) as a parade of delusions and frustrations. In keeping with the theme of undoing oppositions, the book's subtitle, *A Study of Intellectuals and Fascism*, cleverly attacks one of the earliest and most perplexing aspects of Fascism as an anti-intellectual movement propelled by intellectuals. Alastair explains the appeal of Fascism via the gap between the ideal and the real, on the one hand, and the hard boundaries that separate moral and intellectual categories, on the other. What began as a confused amalgam of anti-democratic, anti-Communist, modernist and pro-wwi veteran aspirations (not necessarily in that order) turned into the set of genocidal totalitarian policies that destroyed much of the world and its people. An amorphous political mythology of renewal, rejuvenation and repair was built on a profoundly self-destructive school of thought. Vague egalitarian ideals led to racial discrimination as a structural political principle. A muddled bourgeois socialism became the vehicle for some of the worst forms of exploitation in world history. The unpredictability of that history and inevitability of self-deception meant that few of those thinkers and writers who espoused Fascist ideas had reason to think that 'their apologies for violence would go farther than the paper on which they expressed them'.<sup>19</sup> Fascism was, Alastair argues, a myth that disintegrated on contact with reality:

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16 *Testament French*, n.p.

17 *Testament English*, p. 73; *Testament French*, p. 75.

18 *Testament English*, p. 74; *Testament French*, p. 76.

19 Alastair Hamilton, *The Appeal of Fascism: A Study of Intellectuals and Fascism, 1919-1945* (New York, 1971), p. xv.

In substance Fascism was a 'myth' in the Sorelian sense of the word, a 'system of images' defying logical definition or rational analysis, filled, if submitted to either, with contradictions. From myth to reality, from theory to practice, the gulf, as is often the case, was exceedingly wide. If examined with any degree of objectivity, if its course was traced and its achievements compared with its principles, Fascism was less than a myth: it was a hoax.<sup>20</sup>

Fascism, in other words, functions like a bad novel: constantly building worlds destined to vanish while claiming their eternity, utterly heedless of the moral ideals on which it depends.

Nor is this all. Fascism perpetuates hoaxes and disenchantment in a fashion that constantly borders on ridicule. Consider Alastair's account of Charles Maurras, who might be considered the intellectual godfather of French Fascism and who ended up inspiring other Fascists dialectically rather than directly. In a character description worthy of La Bruyère, Alastair describes Maurras as

[I]solated by his deafness, by the rigid consistency of his ideas and by his baleful sobriety in moments of national inebriation. It was as a deliberate reaction against him that many of his followers deemed it necessary to found or join movements other than the *Action Française*. His overpowering personality, his constancy and his gloom were his attraction, but above all his undoing. While the course of events in the first half of the twentieth century caused most people to change some of their ideas, Maurras never consented to alter his, for he refused to admit that he might once have been mistaken. Determined to be always right, he was equally set on maintaining the purity of his ideals. Were he to resort to political action, they might be compromised; were he to attempt the *coup d'état* he always spoke of, he might fail. He was therefore reluctant to act in any way whatsoever, and it was this, more than anything else, that disenchanted his disciples.<sup>21</sup>

Life imitates art: Maurras is not far from one of Drieu's feckless characters. The breach between Maurras's idealism and the reality of politics goes further: he was an atheist who helped found the very Catholic *Action Française*, an organization that attracted the alarm, jealousy and eventually the condemnation of

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20 Ibid., p. xix.

21 Ibid., p. 171.

the pope.<sup>22</sup> Maurras's contradictions and duplicity spread like an epidemic that reached everyone in France, including Marshall Pétain, who seemed to encourage his collaboration with Germany even as he was in constant contact with Churchill.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, the behaviour of François Coty, who was 'more famous outside France for his talcum powder than his politics', and that of several other millionaires who supported the Fascist cause, underlines the latter's chronic inconsistency: it was a collection of anti-capitalist movements that ended up relying on the support of major capitalists.<sup>24</sup>

This chaotic pattern might also be seen in the strange career of Gabriele d'Annunzio, the caddish, vain, extravagant novelist who catalysed the growth of Fascism in Italy. D'Annunzio's turn to politics came with his election as deputy for Ortona, which earned him the nickname 'the deputy of beauty' because he 'watched the parliamentary debates as an artist rather than a participant, and was always ready to leave them to attend to his love affairs'.<sup>25</sup> Having volunteered for active service, during which he lost an eye and dropped propaganda pamphlets from a plane over Vienna, d'Annunzio became a hero worthy of one of his novels. More 'heroism' came when he invaded and assumed dictatorial powers as Comandante of Fiume in 1919. By March 1920, d'Annunzio's indifference to anything like meaningful leadership led Italian Prime Minister Nitti to describe Fiume as a 'brothel, the refuge of the underworld and *prostitute piú o meno high life*'.<sup>26</sup> Eventually d'Annunzio declared war on Italy itself and was duly ejected from Fiume in early 1921, but not before Lenin had described him as 'one of the only revolutionaries in Italy'.<sup>27</sup> Nobody familiar with d'Annunzio's decadent persona could have predicted any of this. Not only does life imitate art, it always stretches the gulf between the ideal and the real.

Alastair's account of Fascism successfully brings out its unstable and unclassifiable nature. The value of his reading derives from his consistent refusal to be bound by received categories and classifications. Fascism was a movement neither of the left nor of the right;<sup>28</sup> and it is only by paying attention to this neither/nor quality that we can grasp its appeal to so many, even as its inoperability becomes obvious in retrospect. *The Appeal of Fascism* also marks a key turning point away from literature and towards history in Alastair's career. Henceforth, it is the fate of the ideal in the concrete universe that holds his

22 Ibid., pp. 173–4.

23 Ibid., p. 232.

24 Ibid., p. 191.

25 Ibid., p. 27.

26 Ibid., p. 30.

27 Ibid., p. 31.

28 See Z. Sternhell, *Ni droite, ni gauche. L'idéologie fasciste en France* (Paris, 1983).

attention. Hence the unusually readable, literary quality that he brings to all of his subsequent work. Hence, too, the reappearance of certain themes and patterns, especially of putative oppositions transcended and segregation dissolved. By the last quarter of the twentieth century, the world was used to division along linguistic and religious lines. Every belief seemed to have an idiom and a place. Alastair's voluminous publications from the 1980s onwards on the destiny of Arabic and Islamic studies in Europe demonstrate conclusively that such cloistered visions are simply invalid.<sup>29</sup>

In 1981, Alastair published *The Family of Love*, motivated again by the appeal of an unusual movement to 'some of the greatest humanists of the time'.<sup>30</sup> As he had argued a decade earlier, he now contended that the movement fell under the weight of its irreconcilable contradictions, though these were obviously far more laudable than Fascism's constant apologies for violence. The Family of Love brought together European Christians of all stripes united by their desire to transcend their differences: 'Despite their confessional allegiances to visible churches, there remained the ideal of an invisible church which would unite Protestants and Catholics alike.'<sup>31</sup> In intellectual historical and religious terms, there was a lasting achievement with which at least some Familists were associated and which grew out of one of the sect's key objectives: 'Concord was the greatest object of the Antwerp humanists and there was one project which was devised with the aim of ensuring this concord and with which some of the leading scholars in Europe were associated: the Polyglot Bible.'<sup>32</sup> By the early seventeenth century, however, the sect had changed profoundly, and ultimately it disappeared. Nevertheless, Alastair insists on the Family of Love's contribution to the 'atmosphere of greater toleration which permitted the philosophers of the Enlightenment to express their ideas as boldly as they did'.<sup>33</sup> In other words, one form of anti-segregationist thinking leads to another. It is precisely this path of progressive undifferentiation and eventual palingenesis that appeals to Alastair. Only the unmade world can make the world anew, and only history can teach us the best lessons about the destiny of the ideal.

29 Here, too, we find the usual witty attack on received ideas and the long shadow of fiction, as in his forthcoming article on Claude Savary. We might expect Orientalists to be serious, learned, erudite people, but Alastair's narrative of Savary's fraudulence and mendacity reads rather like a comic picaresque novel. See Alastair Hamilton, 'Claude-Etienne Savary: Orientalism and Fraudulence in Eighteenth-Century France', (forthcoming), *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, LXXXII (2019).

30 Alastair Hamilton, *The Family of Love* (Cambridge, 1981), 1.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 70.

32 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 143.

## Islam as a ‘Rational’ Religion: Early Modern European Views

*Noel Malcolm*

Early modern Europe inherited a mass of claims and opinions about Islam from Byzantine and medieval writers, almost all of whom were engaged, directly or indirectly, in anti-Muslim polemic.<sup>1</sup> To any reader dependent on such sources, it would have seemed obvious that Islam was a hugely defective religion. It was of human—or, possibly, diabolical—origin; it appealed to the basest of human passions, especially lust; and it was propagated by ‘the sword’, relying fundamentally on coercion rather than on genuine consent. In some corners of the popular culture of the Western Middle Ages, it was even imagined that Muslims were idolaters or polytheists.<sup>2</sup> Comparing the Qur’an with the Bible, learned authors were happy to dismiss the former as incoherent, not only on stylistic grounds; they denounced it as irrational, self-contradictory and full of absurdities. Medieval writers commonly asserted that the famous Arabic philosophers, such as Avicenna and Alfarabi, had paid only lip-service to Islamic doctrines, knowing them to be contrary to reason.<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 For general studies see A. d’Ancona, *La leggenda di Maometto in Occidente*, ed. A. Borruso (Rome, 1994); M.-T. d’Alverny, ‘La Connaissance de l’Islam en Occident du 1X<sup>e</sup> au milieu du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle’, in *L’Occidente e l’Islam nell’alto medioevo*, 2 vols. (Spoleto, 1965), 2: 577–602; R.W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, MA, 1978); A.-T. Khoury, *Polémique byzantine contre l’Islam (VIII<sup>e</sup>–XIII<sup>e</sup> s.)*, 2nd edn (Leiden, 1972); N. Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh, 1960); R.G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, NJ, 1997); J.V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York, 2002); S.C. Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100–1450* (Ithaca, NY, 2009).
  - 2 Daniel, *Islam and the West*, pp. 309–15, and *The Arabs and Medieval Europe* (London, 1975), pp. 235–7, emphasizes that this was never the dominant view, being mostly confined to some popular literary works; but Akbari, *Idols in the East*, pp. 200–201, 204, 225–7, finds that elements of this view were present in learned culture too.
  - 3 Daniel, *Islam and the West*, pp. 65–6. This was the received wisdom expressed by Bernhard von Breydenbach in his widely read pilgrim narrative of 1486: *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam: eine Pilgerreise ins Heilige Land, frühneuhochdeutscher Text und Übersetzung*, ed. I. Mozer (Berlin, 2010), p. 376.

Of all the medieval texts offering refutations of Islam, the one that exerted the greatest influence on Western thought in subsequent centuries was that composed by the Dominican friar (and former missionary in Baghdad) Riccoldo da Monte Croce in c. 1300. It circulated widely in manuscript; a version of it was printed several times, under the title *Confutatio Alcorani*, in the early sixteenth century; and it was translated into German by Martin Luther in 1542.<sup>4</sup> A large part of Riccoldo's argument was based on the principle that Islam was, in every way, contrary to reason. He described the Qur'an as a disordered text, and declared that it contained both absurd statements and mutually contradictory propositions. He seized on particular Muslim observances as irrational: ritual ablutions were one example, and especially the provision that, in the absence of water, sand could be used instead.<sup>5</sup> But the main thrust of his argument concerned unreasonableness in the field of morality. 'It is also clear', he wrote, 'that the Koran is not the law of God, because it agrees neither with the law of God, nor with the philosophers who talk about the virtues and about man's final end.' Indeed, 'Muhammad said almost nothing about the virtues.' The Qur'an's teachings on sexual matters showed that it could not be 'a law according to reason'; and whatever claims it might have had to the authority of reason were undermined by the fact that it was delivered by 'an evil, rapacious, adulterous and murderous man'.<sup>6</sup>

Only at one point in his treatise did Riccoldo raise, very briefly, an argument that might have seemed to point in a different direction. Having given a general summary of the teachings of the Qur'an, he remarked: 'The purpose of all this is to remove anything that was hard to believe and difficult to do, and to permit everything for which they had an inclination ... especially the Arabs: namely, greed, plunder and intemperance.'<sup>7</sup> The phrase 'anything that was

4 On Riccoldo see R. George-Tvrtković, *A Christian Pilgrim in Medieval Iraq: Riccoldo da Montecroce's Encounter with Islam* (Turnhout, 2012); on this text see J.-M. Mérioux, 'L'Ouvrage d'un frère prêcheur florentin en Orient à la fin du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Fede e controversia nel '300 e '500*, ed. E. Panella (Pistoia, 1986) [= *Memorie domenicane*, n.s., 17 (1986)], pp. 1–144, and J. Ehmann, 'Einführung', in Riccoldo da Monte Croce ['de Montecrucis'], *Confutatio Alcorani*, with Martin Luther, *Verlegung des Alcoran*, ed. J. Ehmann (Würzburg, 1999), pp. 9–25.

5 Riccoldo da Monte Croce, *Confutatio Alcorani*, pp. 68–72 (inconsistent), 84–6 (absurd), 88 (ablutions), 124–8 (disordered).

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 64: 'Manifestum et hinc est [non esse legem Dei] Alcoranum, [propterea quod] neque cum lege dei conuenit, neque cum philosophis, qui de virtutibus et de extremo fine, qui est in hominibus, tractant', 'Mahometus autem de virtutibus quasi nihil tractauit'; 80: 'iniquo viro, rapace, moeche, homicida'; 84: 'lex ... [secundum rationem]'.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 42: 'Huius autem omnis intentio est, rescare quicquid erat arduum in credendo, et difficile in operando, concedere autem omne ad quod proliui erant ... et maxime aliorum Arabes, gulam videlicet, rapinam et intemperantiam.'

hard to believe' clearly referred to some of the basic points of Christian dogma which, as Riccoldo had explained, were rejected by Islam—above all, the doctrines of the Trinity and the Atonement. In relation to the latter he had just written: 'He who denies the Passion of Christ denies all those mysteries which gain their efficacy from that Passion.'<sup>8</sup> To a modern eye (that is, a post-seventeenth-century one), to say that Islam rejected 'mysteries' and anything 'hard to believe' seems to suggest that, far from being a distinctively irrational religion, it was applying some sharp-edged criteria of reason to the claims of Christianity. But that was not Riccoldo's point of view.

His position seems to have been close to that of a more famous Dominican, Thomas Aquinas, whose little treatise on how to respond to Muslim criticisms of Christianity, *De rationibus fidei*, was written roughly 36 years earlier, in 1264. This work was addressed to a Catholic priest in Antioch who had supplied Aquinas with examples of Muslim objections to Christian dogmas: for instance, 'They ridicule ... the fact that we call Christ the son of God, since God does not have a wife.' In response, Aquinas wrote: 'we should note that their ridicule is itself to be derided ... For since they are carnal people, they can think only of those things that are of flesh and blood.'<sup>9</sup> In other words, the objection derived not from reason as such, but from the stunted reason of those who were in thrall to their passions. The assumptions behind Aquinas's argument had just been set out in his much longer treatise the *Summa contra gentiles*, where he considered what sorts of argument could legitimately be used when propounding or defending the Christian faith in discussions with Muslims and other infidels. There were, he explained, two kinds of theological truth: ones that could be established by natural reason itself, and ones that were above reason. The former were the familiar truths of natural theology (that there is a God, that he is all-powerful, that he created the world, and so on): infidels could attain these by their own mental efforts, or, if they had failed to do so, they could be brought to recognize them by rational instruction. The truths above reason, such as the Trinity and the Atonement, were known by revelation and could not be demonstrated by natural reason. However—and this was the crucial Thomist claim—they were all entirely compatible with reason; so the job of the Christian apologist was to use natural reason not to prove that they were necessarily true, but to dismantle all the inadequate arguments

8 Ibid., p. 40: 'Qui autem passionem christi negat, negat omnia mysteria, quae a diuina passione efficaciam habent.'

9 Thomas Aquinas, *De rationibus fidei*, in his *Opera omnia*, ed. R. Busa, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1980), 3: 509-13; 509 (I): 'irrident ... quod christum filium dei dicimus, cum deus uxorem non habeat', (111): 'considerandum est derisibilem esse irrisionem qua nos irrident ... cum enim sint carnales, non possunt nisi ea quae sunt carnis et sanguinis cogitare'.

raised by infidels against them.<sup>10</sup> If Islam sought, in Riccoldo's words, to 'remove anything that was hard to believe', this was not because it applied reason to irrational dogmas; rather, it was because the very limited rationality of passionate men, such as Muhammad and his followers, could not cope—as fully developed reason could—with the revealed higher truths of Christianity.

Given this widely accepted Thomist position as a starting-point in the latter part of the Middle Ages, it may seem surprising that many Western thinkers developed, during the early modern period, the view that Islam was an exemplar of 'rational' religion. The growth of this idea was a slow process, owing more to intra-Christian debates and concerns than to any purely objective study of Islam in itself. Yet changes in the state of Western knowledge of Islam, and of Muslims, did also play a role.

Riccoldo's argument that Islam was unacquainted with natural moral virtues was gradually undermined by reports from travellers, former captives and others, who provided clear evidence of the observance of moral principles in Islamic societies. (In a different text, his *Itinerarium*, Riccoldo had himself commented—for the sake of shaming Western readers—on the superior charity, hospitality and mutual harmony of the Muslims in Baghdad; but this work was much less widely known, and such information was simply omitted from his polemic against the Qur'an.)<sup>11</sup> The former captive Johann Schiltberger, in an account of his experiences that was printed five times in the fifteenth century and six times in the sixteenth, praised the Muslims' strict regard for social justice in the marketplace, and noted that 'before the sermon, their priests [sc. imams] always tell them to be helpful to one another and to obey authority, and that the rich should show humility towards the poor.'<sup>12</sup> Most eye-witness descriptions of Ottoman life in the century after the fall of Constantinople paid special attention to private charity and philanthropy—the funding of hospitals, soup-kitchens, inns, fountains and so on. In one popular account, published by the ex-captive Luigi Bassano in 1545, a lengthy discussion of this topic began with the general statement: 'If the belief and religion of the Muslims were as good as some of the pious works which they perform, they could have a better hope for the salvation of their souls.'<sup>13</sup> While Bassano's comment

10 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*, in his *Opera omnia*, ed. R. Busa, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1980), 2: 1–151; 1 (I.iii.2), 2 (I.ix.2–3), 114 (IV.i.3–4).

11 See Daniel, *Islam and the West*, p. 196.

12 Johann Schiltberger, *Reisen in Europa, Asia und Afrika von 1394 bis 1427*, ed. K.F. Neumann (Munich, 1859), p. 132: 'Och sagent in ir priester allweg voran ir predig, das sie hilfflich aneinander sigent vnd iren obersten vnderthänig. Vnd die richen gegen den armen demüting.'

13 Luigi Bassano, *Costumi et i modi particolari della vita de' Turchi*, ed. F. Babinger (Munich,



implied a disjunction between their religion and their morality, the general tendency of other writers was to make connections between the two; like Schiltberger, they could not ignore the fact that Islam also contained much moral teaching. Another former captive, Giovanni Antonio Menavino, whose widely read description of Ottoman life was first published in 1548, gave a list of eight Muslim 'commandments': the third of these was 'founded on reasons that are in themselves natural, that is, that you should not do to anyone else anything that you would equally not wish to be done to yourself'.<sup>14</sup>

For Protestant theologians, it was actually preferable to suppose that Muslims performed their virtuous acts for religious reasons. This assumption made it possible to align them directly with Roman Catholics, as people who believed that pious deeds would ease their passage into heaven. Western descriptions of Ottoman life were even more insistent—again, for the sake of shaming their Christian readers—on the piety of Muslims, their conscientious performance of fasts and other observances, the strict decorum observed in their mosques and so on. To Martin Luther, such 'works' were the primary target when he wrote that 'the Turk' (meaning a generic Muslim) was 'papistical, because he believes that holiness and salvation come through works'. But it was on the same grounds that he also dismissed the virtues shown by Muslims in their daily lives; Luther was happy to say that they did more good deeds than Catholic monks, as he was confident that neither category could be saved thereby.<sup>15</sup> This became a popular theme among Protestant writers: Heinrich Bullinger, for example, declared that 'Muhammad too has his monks and priests, and derives salvation from their merits; for he attributes salvation not to faith, but to the merit of works'.<sup>16</sup>

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1963), p. 98: 'S'il credere & la fede de Turchi fussi si buona, come sono alcun'opere pie che loro fanno, migliore speranza potrebbono hauere della salute dell'anima loro.'

14 Giovanni Antonio Menavino, *I cinque libri della legge, religione, et vita de' Turchi: et della corte, & d'alcune guerre del Gran Turco* (Venice, 1548), p. 17: 'fondato in ragioni per se medesime naturali, cio è, che ad alcuno non si faccia quello, che egualmente non uorresti, che fusse fatto à te stesso'.

15 Martin Luther, *Vom Kriege widder die Türcken*, in his *Werke*, 73 vols. (Weimar, 1883–2009), 30, part 2: 107–48; 129: 'Papistisch, Denn er gleubt durch werck heilig und selig zu sein'; id., 'Vorwort' to *Libellus de ritu et moribus Turcorum*, in his *Werke*, 30, part 2: 198–208; 206 (dismissing virtues); V. Segesvary, *L'Islam et la Réforme: étude sur l'attitude des Réformateurs zurichois envers l'Islam (1510–1550)* (Geneva, 1977), p. 224 (monks).

16 Heinrich Bullinger, *Der Türgg. Von anfang und ursprung desz Türggischen Gloubens, der Türggen, ouch jrer Königen und Keyseren, und wie fürträffenlich vil landen unnd lüthen, sy inner 266 jaren, ynngenommen, und der Christenheit abtrungen habind* ([Zurich], 1567), sig. A6r: 'So hat Machomet ouch sine münch vnd pffaffen / setzt in deren verdienst das heil. Dann er gibt die säligkeit zu nit dem glouben ... sunder dem verdienst der wercken.'

It was possible to take this line, however, without altering the traditional view that the principles of morality could be known by natural reason; the point was merely that morality was, in itself, inadequate for the purposes of salvation, not that it was unattainable by human means. As Philipp Melancthon explained:

the Gospel must be distinguished from all other kinds of teaching, from the civil laws, the opinions of Muhammad, and the judgments of the Jews. Some knowledge of the [moral] law is installed in the human mind, that is, an ability to judge between virtuous and wicked actions ... namely, actions of the kind that are listed in the Ten Commandments. It is from this teaching of the law that [moral] philosophy has arisen, and the opinions of the civil lawyers, the Muslims and the Jews. Just as knowledge of numbers is common to all men, as it is innate in us, so too is that knowledge of the [moral] laws.<sup>17</sup>

This was just a statement of the commonplace scholastic view that true principles of morality were available to every person through the operation of 'synderesis' in each human conscience. However, in explaining the falsity of non-Christian religions (and of non-Protestant versions of Christianity), Melancthon also argued that their fundamental error consisted in projecting those moral principles—true and rational though they were—into a realm of theology to which they did not belong. It was, he wrote, the doctrine of grace and justification that distinguished 'the Church of God from those others who are pagans, Jews, Muslims and Pelagians—that is, all those who imagine that man can be just by means of law or moral training (*disciplina*)'. Unfortunately, he continued, many people misunderstood the teaching of Christ on this fundamental point; they 'transform it into philosophy', and 'imagine that there is no difference between philosophical justice and Christian justice'.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Philipp Melancthon, *Annotationes in Evangelia*, in his *Opera quae supersunt omnia*, 'Corpus reformatorum', ed. K. ['C.'] G. Bretschneider et al., 28 vols. (Halle, 1834–60), 14: 258: 'discernendum est Evangelium ab omnibus aliis generibus doctrinarum, a legibus civilibus, a Mahometi opinionibus, a Iudaicis iudiciis. Humanae menti insita est quaedam legis noticia, id est, discrimen honestarum et turpium actionum ... videlicet actionum, quarum genera recensentur in Decalogo. Ex hac legis doctrina orta est philosophia, et natae sunt civiles et Mahometicae et Iudaicae opiniones. Et ut numerorum noticia omnibus hominibus communis est, quia nobiscum nascitur, ita communis est illa legum noticia omnibus hominibus.'

<sup>18</sup> Philipp Melancthon, *Loci theologici* III.8, 'De gratia et de iustificatione', in his *Opera*, 21: 739: 'Ecclesiam Dei a ceteris Gentibus, Iudaeis, Mahometistis et Pelagianis, hoc est, omnibus, qui imaginantur hominem iustum esse lege seu disciplina', 'hanc transformant

In two brief comments on Muhammad, Melanchthon went a little further than this, suggesting not only that Islam improperly extended the realm of morality, but also that the Prophet of Islam had deliberately engaged in a kind of doctrinal rationalization. 'He removed those articles of faith which do not accord with reason. He denies that Christ is the Son of God; he says that he was only a man, that is, a good prophet, which is like saying that he was similar to Socrates.'<sup>19</sup> And again: 'Since he knew that disputes arise over difficult articles of faith, which are not judged by reason, he removed the doctrine of the three persons of the Godhead, and claimed that God is only one person.'<sup>20</sup> While that second comment raised a particular point about the interests and motives of someone founding a religion (which will be discussed below), the first made a notably general observation on the relationship between reason and, respectively, Christianity and Islam. Here, for all his debts to the Aristotelian-scholastic tradition, Melanchthon stepped away from the Thomist theory about the ultimate compatibility of all Christian dogma with reason; at the same time, he put forward what may have been the first overall description of Muhammad as a rationalizing religious thinker.<sup>21</sup>

For Roman Catholics in this period, who mostly accepted the Thomist scheme, there was nothing problematic about saying that Islam contained the basic truths of natural theology, as established by human reason. The problem was that Muslims rejected the revealed truths of Christianity which, although compatible with reason, could not be demonstrated *a priori* by it. By the latter part of the sixteenth century, indeed, it was possible for some Catholic writers to present Islam as resting on a bedrock of natural theology. In William Rainolds's posthumously published dialogue *Calvino-Turcismus*, for example, one of the speakers, Michaeas, was a convert to Islam who insisted that the essential precepts of natural theology were common to all men. As he explained, he

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in Philosophiam, extenuant peccatum in natura, cogitant lege Deo tantum requiri disciplinam; Deinde imaginantur, nihil interesse inter Philosophicam et Christianam iustitiam.'

19 Philipp Melanchthon, *Postilla melanthoniana*, in his *Opera*, 25: 499: 'Sustulit articulos, qui non congruunt ad rationem. Negat Christum esse Filium Dei; dicit eum fuisse tantum hominem, id est, propheta bonum: ut, si quis dicat fuisse similem Socrati.'

20 Philipp Melanchthon, *Chronicon Carionis*, in his *Opera*, 12: 1075: 'quia sciebat dissidia oriri de difficilibus articulis, qui non iudicantur ratione, removit doctrinam de tribus Personis divinitatis, et contendit tantum unicum personam esse Deum.'

21 The classic study of Melanchthon's Aristotelianism is P. Petersen, *Geschichte der aristotelischen Philosophie im protestantischen Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1921), esp. pp. 38–108. On his thinking about Islam see M. Köhler, *Melanchthon und der Islam: ein Beitrag zur Klärung des Verhältnisses zwischen Christentum und Fremdreigionen in der Reformationszeit* (Leipzig, 1938).

had at first joined the Church of England, but was put off by the fact that its doctrines were decreed by the political sovereign; he had then read the Qur'an (in Theodor Bibliander's edition of the medieval Latin translation by Robert of Ketton) and had compared its teachings with those of natural theology, concluding that they more or less coincided. That was why he had decided to become a Muslim.<sup>22</sup>

This basic assumption could also be made by Protestants. The great Huguenot polemicist Philippe Duplessis-Mornay put forward a list of theological principles that were known from the 'common notions' inhering in all people, which included 'that there is one God, ruler of all things; that he is good, and not at all the author of evil; that he is wise, and therefore does nothing in vain; and again, that man is by nature made for immortal life; and that man should worship God and be pleasing to him, in order to obtain beatitude'. But at the same time he railed against those who, observing that the 'pagans, Jews, Muslims and Christians' all accepted these points, imagined that they were all equally on the way to salvation.<sup>23</sup>

For both Protestants and Catholics, then, it was Christian revelation that made the essential difference. However, one of the fundamental disagreements that emerged between them during this period was over its interpretation: both could agree that Christianity depended on revealed truths, but the Catholic view was that those truths could not be reliably interpreted without recourse to the tradition of the Roman Church. And although Protestants claimed that Scripture was self-illuminating and self-interpreting, the inescapable reality was that when their exegetes and theologians studied the Bible, they were using their own human reason to work out what it meant. The development of increasingly sophisticated textual-critical methods could only raise the stakes here: as it became clear, for example, that the 'Johannine comma' was an interpolation, and therefore that there was no explicit statement of Trinitarian doctrine in the Bible, Catholics could use this to emphasize how important the tradition of the Church was as a vessel of divine truth—and

22 William Rainolds, *Calvino-Turcismus, id est Calvinisticae perfidiae, cum Mahumetana collatio, et dilucida utriusque sectae confutatio* (Antwerp, 1597), pp. 67–71 (and cf., on principles of religion and virtue known by nature, pp. 722–30).

23 Philippe Duplessis-Mornay ['Mornaeus'], *De veritate religionis Christianae liber; adversus atheos, Epicureos, Ethnicos, Iudaeos, Mahumedistas, & caeteros infideles* (Antwerp, 1583), sigs. \*8v: 'Ethnicos, Iudaeos, Mahumetanos, Christianos', 2\*1v: 'Quòd Deus vnus, omnium rector; Quòd bonus, & minimè auctor mali; Quòd sapiens, ac proinde nil agit frustra. Item, quòd homo ad immortalitatem natura comparatus: Quòd homo Deum colere, Deo gratus esse debet, ut ad beatitudinem perueniat.'

thus also to show how likely it was that Protestant methods of biblical interpretation would lead to heresies of the worst kind.

Anti-Trinitarianism was, in fact, the leading example of a heretical position, denounced by both Catholics and Protestants, that arose from a critical study of the scriptural text. While Catholics could decry the anti-Trinitarians both for their rationalism and for their acceptance of the Protestant principle of 'sola scriptura', Protestants were much more likely to see them as merely reliant on human reason. And, given that denial of the divinity of Christ was well known to be a central feature of the Muslim argument against Christianity, it is not surprising that a favourite tactic of critics of anti-Trinitarianism was to align it with Islam. This was made easier by the fact that one of the most important opponents of Trinitarian doctrine, Miguel Servet (Servetus), had actually quoted from the Qur'an both to suggest that Muhammad had preserved an authentic, non-Trinitarian belief about the nature of Jesus, and to argue that it was the introduction of Trinitarianism that had caused the development of Islam itself: Muhammad 'departed from Christianity because of that corrupt doctrine of the Trinitarians'. (At his trial he was accused of studying the Qur'an and favouring Muslims; Melancthon would even claim, quite falsely, that Servet had spent time at an Islamic seminary in North Africa.)<sup>24</sup> Although Servet's work was vigorously suppressed, his argument on this point lived on in the writings of two of the founders of the Unitarian tradition in Transylvania, Giorgio Biandrata and Ferenc Dávid.<sup>25</sup> In the 1590s Fausto Sozzini, the founder of the most influential tradition of early modern anti-Trinitarian doctrine, Socinianism, excused the citing of the Qur'an by Transylvanian ministers, while also insisting rather defensively that his teaching on the relationship between God and Jesus was essentially different from that of Islam.<sup>26</sup>

The link between Islam and anti-Trinitarianism was maintained by Protestant polemical writers for several generations. And one reason for their special fervency against anti-Trinitarians was the fact that Roman Catholic authors

24 Miguel Servet, *Restitution du Christianisme* [*Christianismi restitutio*], ed. R.-M. Bénin, 2 vols. (Paris, 2011), 1: 175 (Muhammad's belief about Jesus), 177: 'Ob prauam illam trinitariorum doctrinam descuiat à christianismo'; J. Pannier, 'Calvin et les Turcs', *Revue historique*, 180 (1937), 267–86; 281 (trial); Kohler, *Melancthon und der Islam*, p. 89. On Servet's use of the Qur'an see P. Hughes, 'Servetus and the Quran', *The Journal of Unitarian Universalist History*, 30 (2005), 55–70.

25 P. Hughes, 'In the Footsteps of Servetus: Biandrata, Dávid, and the Quran', *The Journal of Unitarian Universalist History*, 31 (2006–7), 57–63.

26 D. Klein, 'Muslimischer Antitrinitarismus im lutherischen Rostock: Zacharias Grapius der Jüngere und die *Epistola theologica* des Ahmad ibn 'Abdallah', in *Wahrnehmung des Islam zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung*, ed. D. Klein and B. Platow (Munich, 2008), pp. 41–60; 41.

happily portrayed the denial of the Trinity as a natural consequence of Protestantism, which had set unguided human reason on a slippery slope; the story of Adam Neuser, for example (a Reformed theologian from Heidelberg who first became an anti-Trinitarian and then moved to Istanbul and converted to Islam), was a gift to Catholic polemicists and a serious embarrassment to Protestant ones.<sup>27</sup> Discussions of such matters could hardly fail to strengthen connections in many readers' minds between Islam, pernicious heresy and 'rational' theology. In his *Historia orientalis* the Swiss Reformed scholar of Arabic Johann Heinrich Hottinger set out a lengthy parallel between Islam and Socinianism, beginning with the argument that both of them claim that there is a common religion by which anyone can be saved, if he or she worships God 'according to the light of nature'. On their treatment of the Bible, he observed that both took from the New Testament only what suited them; that the Socinians took whatever seemed to fit their corrupt natural reason; and that both set up reason as an authoritative principle alongside and apart from Scripture. It was because of these and other resemblances, he argued, that 'not a few people have passed from Socinianism or Arminianism to Islam'. Hottinger's analysis influenced a whole series of Protestant authors in the latter part of the seventeenth century.<sup>28</sup> Generally, the comparison between Islam and Christian anti-Trinitarianism was rejected by the anti-Trinitarians themselves, of course; but in 1682 the French heterodox thinker Noël Aubert de Versé and an English Unitarian collaborator did send an irenic letter to a Moroccan envoy in London, praising Muhammad for defending theological truth (while also respectfully offering to help reform the teachings of the Qur'an, by removing some minor contradictions which had crept in after Muhammad had written it).<sup>29</sup>

27 On Neuser see C.J. Burchill, *The Heidelberg Antitrinitarians* (Baden-Baden, 1989), pp. 85–124; R. Motika, 'Adam Neuser, ein Heidelberger Theologe im Osmanischen Reich', in *Frauen, Bilder und Gelehrte: Studien zu Gesellschaft und Künsten im Osmanischen Reich*, ed. S. Prätör and C.K. Neumann, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 2002), 2: 523–38; M. Mulsow, 'Fluchträume und Konversionsräume zwischen Heidelberg und Istanbul: der Fall Adam Neuser', in *Kriminelle—Freidenker—Alchemisten*, ed. M. Mulsow (Cologne, 2014), pp. 33–60.

28 Johann Heinrich Hottinger, *Historia Orientalis*, 2nd edn (Zurich, 1660), pp. 361–96; 363: 'non pauci à Socinianismo sive Arminianismo transierint ad Muhammedismum', 364: 'juxta lumen naturae', 366 (Bible, reason). See also J. Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger: Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 209–17, and M. Mulsow, 'Islam und Sozinianismus: eine Parallelwahrnehmung der Frühen Neuzeit', in *Wahrnehmung des Islam zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung*, ed. D. Klein and B. Platow (Munich, 2008), pp. 31–3 (Hottinger), 34 (his influence).

29 See C. Leslie, *The Socinian Controversy Discuss'd* (London, 1708), part 6 (separately paginated), pp. iii–xiii, xxviii (letter); M. Mulsow, 'The "New Socinians": Intertextuality and Cultural Exchange in Late Socinianism', in *Socinians and Arminianism: Antitrinitarians*,

The connections that were made between heretical anti-Trinitarianism, Islam and rational theology certainly contributed towards the development of the more general idea that Islam was a rational religion. But this was just one strand in a more complex web of arguments. The traditional portrait of Islam as a mass of contradictions and nonsense remained very powerful among mainstream Christian writers of all kinds. Even when condemning Islam and Socinianism together, for example, the Czech Protestant author (and former diplomat in Istanbul) Václav Budovec described the Qur'an as 'a chaos of fables', and argued that Satan had cleverly filled Islam with such absurdities so that Muslims, when considering the Bible, would conclude that just as their Koran is composed of fables, so too the Old and New Testaments are made up of lies.<sup>30</sup> Standard anti-Muslim works written by Catholic theologians in the seventeenth century for refutatory or conversionary purposes put great emphasis, whenever they could, on what seemed to be absurd Qur'anic claims or Muslim beliefs. In his *Apologia pro Christiana religione* (1631), for example, Filippo Guadagnoli (one of Rome's leading Arabic scholars) ridiculed the popular Muslim idea that the earth rested on the horns of a bull, which caused earthquakes when it shook its horns, as well as the Qur'anic verse (18: 86) which appears to claim that the setting sun descends into a spring or fountain; writing a guide to the conversion of Muslims 60 years later, the Jesuit Emmanuele Sanz repeated those points, and added a list of the 'false miracles' of Muhammad.<sup>31</sup> (On the general question of miracles, Christian polemicists were happy to have it both ways, citing the Qur'an as saying that Muhammad did not perform them—in order to show how inferior he was to Jesus, whose ministry was confirmed by miracles—and at the same time ridiculing those miracles which, they said, were narrated in the Qur'an.)<sup>32</sup>

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*Calvinists and Cultural Exchange in Seventeenth-Century Europe*, ed. M. Mulsow and J. Rohls (Leiden, 2005), pp. 49–78; 57–61.

30 Václav Budovec ['Budowetz'], *Circulus horologii lunaris et solaris* (Hanau, 1616), pp. 150: 'Chaos quoddam fabularum', 163: 'sicut ipsorum Alcoran ex fabulis est compositus: ita vetus quoque & nouum Testamentum ex mendaciis conflatum esse'. On Budovec see T. Rataj, *České země ve stínu půlměsíce: obraz Turka v rané novověké literatuře z Českých zemí* (Dolní Břežany, 2002), pp. 129–35; L. Lisy-Wagner, *Islam, Christianity and the Making of Czech Identity, 1453–1683* (Farnham, 2013), pp. 75–80, 94–9.

31 Filippo Guadagnoli ['P. Guadagnolus'], *Apologia pro Christiana religione* (Rome, 1631), pp. 208–9; Emmanuele Sanz, *Breve trattato nel quale con ragioni dimostrative si convincono manifestamente i Turchi, senza che in guisa veruna possano negarlo, esser falsa la legge di Maometto, e vera solamente quella di Cristo* (Catania, 1691), pp. 52–66.

32 For Qur'anic statements of the reasons why Muhammad did not perform miracles, see, e.g., 6: 37; 7: 204; 17: 58; 29: 49. For the view that the lack of miracles was a powerful argument against Islam see M. Febure, *Theatre de la Turquie* (Paris, 1682), p. 12; for ridicule see Sanz, *Breve trattato*, pp. 58–66. A standard view, expressed by Riccoldo, was that

The standard Christian view of Muhammad, after all, was that he was an impostor and a deceiver. This meant that he worked on the gullibility of his audience, being eager to persuade them of whatever marvellous feats and experiences—such as being spoken to by the Holy Spirit in the form of a pigeon pecking at his ear—they were willing to credit. To modern eyes, this seems hardly the basis for promoting any idea that Islam was a ‘rational’ religion. And yet it was from the notion of imposture that that idea drew, in the end, its most outspoken support. The key to this conundrum lies in the development of a set of assumptions about how pagan religions had been made to serve the instrumental purposes of clever legislators.

This is a complex matter, which can only be summarized briefly here.<sup>33</sup> All early modern thinking on this matter went back, directly or indirectly, to Niccolò Machiavelli, who had praised the legendary early ruler of Rome, Numa Pompilius, for strengthening his authority over the people by claiming to receive instructions from a nymph. Generalizing further, Machiavelli wrote:

There has never been a legislator who has not had recourse to God when putting people under extraordinary laws, since otherwise those laws would never have been accepted. For there are many benefits which, although they will be recognized by a prudent person, are not so self-evidently beneficial as to enable the prudent person to persuade others about them. That is why wise men, wishing to remove this difficulty, have recourse to God. Lycurgus did so; so did Solon; and so did many others.<sup>34</sup>

A long tradition of argument developed along these lines, embracing both civil legislators and the founders of pagan religions. As West European writers tried to analyse the reasons for the military success and political stability of the Ottoman state, various aspects of Islamic practice and belief were interpreted as clever devices introduced by Muhammad in order to extend and strengthen temporal rule. (The banning of alcohol served civil peace and

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whilst Muhammad correctly stated that he performed none, miracles were later falsely attributed to him by his followers (*Confutatio Alcorani*, pp. 72–80).

33 For more detail on what follows, see my *Useful Enemies: Islam and the Ottoman Empire in Western Political Thought, 1450–1750* (Oxford, 2019), esp. chs. 7, 12, 13.

34 Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discorsi* 1.11, in his *Discorsi sopra la prima decina di Tito Livio*, ed. F. Bausi, in ‘Edizione nazionale delle opere di Niccolò Machiavelli’, section 1, vol. 2, tomes 1–2, ed. E. Malato et al. (Rome, 2001), 1: 79–80: ‘mai fu alcuno ordinatore di leggi straordinarie [*sic*] in uno popolo, che non ricorresse a Dio, perché altrimenti non sarebbero accettate; perché sono molti beni conosciuti da uno prudente, i quali non hanno in sé ragioni evidenti da poterle persuadere a altrui. Però gli uomini savi che vogliono tôrre questa difficoltà ricorrono a Dio. Così fece Ligurgo, così Solone, così molti altri.’



military efficiency; the doctrine that each person's time of death was absolutely foreordained made soldiers less fearful in battle; the permitting of polygamy was thought to strengthen the state by boosting the population; and so on.) Some writers followed this line, while still repeating the usual criticisms of Islam as a confused and absurd religion. But others, who were conscious perhaps of the incongruity of such a portrayal of Muhammad as simultaneously a brilliant legislator and an absurdly foolish religious thinker, and who were also willing to use the case of Islam more actively for critical purposes vis-à-vis their own society and religion, began to see some aspects of Islam itself as expressing—intrinsically, so to speak—the wisdom of a highly intelligent and rational founder-legislator. Thus, when Francis Osborne, an outspoken admirer of Machiavelli, wrote his *Political Reflections upon the Government of the Turks* (1656), he not only included many of the standard arguments about the temporal value of Islamic practices (the prohibition of wine and so on), but also explained that the banning of images was 'out of a deep Reason of State': image-worship provided too easy a target for seditious reformers 'to foment a change, by discovering to the people *absurdities* in their *Worship*, which is better prevented in one directed, as his is, to the onely invisible and omnipotent *Creator*'.<sup>35</sup> Here, while the overall argument was still framed in instrumental terms, some of the content focused on the reasonableness of the religion itself, which avoided 'absurdities' and affirmed a fundamental theological truth. (In a similar vein, when contrasting Islam with Roman Catholicism, Osborne wrote that the 'priests' of Islam did not perplex the consciences of the people with 'useless terrours or hard questions'.)<sup>36</sup> The small seed planted more than a century earlier by Melancthon, when he wrote that Muhammad 'removed those articles of faith which do not accord with reason', and that 'Since he knew that disputes arise over difficult articles of faith, which are not judged by reason, he removed the doctrine of the three persons of the Godhead', now began to yield a much greater harvest.

The most powerful thinker to develop this argument in the seventeenth century was Henry Stubbe, whose treatise 'An Account of the Rise [or: 'the Original'] and Progress of Mahometanism' was written in the early 1670s and circulated thereafter in manuscript.<sup>37</sup> Stubbe was a follower of both Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes (whose *Leviathan* he began to translate into

35 Francis Osborne, *Political Reflections upon the Government of the Turks* (London, 1656), pp. 6–7.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 73.

37 On Stubbe see P.M. Holt, *A Seventeenth-Century Defender of Islam: Henry Stubbe (1632–76) and His Book* (London, 1972); J.R. Jacob, *Henry Stubbe, Radical Protestantism and the Early Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1982).

Latin); and perhaps the best way to describe his approach to Muhammad is to say that he turned the Machiavellian argument, as expressed by Osborne, in a Hobbesian direction. Hobbes agreed that people such as Numa Pompilius and Muhammad had invoked religious authority in order to strengthen their own rule; but he was not an admirer of this procedure, as he thought that to ground temporal authority on false religious beliefs was to store up trouble—superstition and priestcraft—in the long term.<sup>38</sup> It was much better, in Hobbes's view, for the obedience of the subjects to be based on a rational understanding of the need for sovereign power. Stubbe managed to square the circle of producing an admiring portrait of Muhammad on both Machiavellian and Hobbesian grounds, by arguing that the Prophet of Islam was much more a rational reformer of religion than an inventor of it. To borrow a Hobbesian metaphor: Muhammad did not take the blank sheet of people's minds and scribble it over with superstitions; rather, he found a set of badly scribbled-over minds and left them much clearer, with reasonable doctrines and just a practical minimum of religious observances. Thus was Hobbesian rationalism combined with Machiavellian appreciation of the religious legislator and clever inculcator of beliefs.

Stubbe's work was based on a thoroughly historicizing view of early Christianity and its relation to Judaism (inspired above all by the works of John Selden), and was also influenced by Hobbes's dismissive account of the early development of patristic theology, especially concerning the Trinity. According to Stubbe, by the seventh century, when Muhammad began his mission, Christianity had deteriorated into a mixture of external ceremonies, vicious factionalism and the invocation of confused theoretical distinctions. It was in order to restore the original spirit of Christianity that Muhammad was obliged to introduce what seemed like a new faith. The essence of that faith was presented by Stubbe as a pure and almost philosophical theology: God is one, eternal and omnipotent, his providence directs all things, and so on. Fundamentally, this was a rational religion; discussing Muhammad's prohibition of divinatory practices, Stubbe even declared that 'This great prophet would not suffer his Musulmen to employ anything but reason in their debates.'<sup>39</sup>

There is some evidence that, even though Stubbe's work was available only in manuscript, it had an influence not only on 'free-thinkers' such as Charles Blount (who plagiarized it in print) but also, directly or indirectly, on sincere

38 For his account of Muhammad see Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. N. Malcolm, 3 vols. (Oxford, 2012), 2: 176–8 (original pagination: p. 57).

39 Henry Stubbe, 'The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism', in *Henry Stubbe and the Beginnings of Islam: The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism*, ed. N. Matar (New York, 2014), pp. 65–257; 199–200 (basic doctrine), 206: 'This great...'

Unitarian theologians. In 1690, for example, Arthur Bury wrote that Muhammad had professed the articles of the Christian faith, 'and declared himself not an Apostate, but Reformer; pretending to purify it from the Corruptions wherewith it had been defiled'. Stephen Nye, in the following year, insisted that '*Mahomet* is affirmed by divers Historians, to have had no other Design in pretending himself to be a Prophet, but to restore the Belief of *the Vnity of GOD*, which at that time was extirpated among the Eastern Christians'.<sup>40</sup> But the most dramatic use of Stubbe's argument was made by the radical free-thinker John Toland, in his *Nazarenus: Or, Jewish, Gentile and Mahometan Christianity* (1718). While Toland took Stubbe's basic historical scheme and elaborated on it, his most important purpose was to highlight a theme which had been present, but not dominant, in Stubbe: the evils of priestcraft. The story of Islam was used, on Toland's account, as a device for criticizing priestly power. As he explained, Islam was closer to Christianity as it had at first been instituted—'the original, uncorrupted, easy, intelligible Institution; but not the fabulous systems, lucrative inventions, burthensome superstitions, and unintelligible jargon early substituted to it'.<sup>41</sup> The word 'lucrative' there indicated one of the driving forces of the priestly corruption of Christianity; but the words 'fabulous' and 'unintelligible' implied that Christianity was by far the less rational of the two religions. The traditional Western view, in which it was Islam that was guilty of imposing fables and absurdities, was here entirely reversed.

It was radicals such as Stubbe and Toland who put forward the strongest versions of this argument. But the general interpretation, derived from the Machiavellian tradition of theorizing about clever founders and legislators, had a much wider currency among writers on Islam, as it conveniently made possible a combination of the 'Unitarian' view of that religion as a simplified monotheism and the idea—which persisted strongly in most Western writings on Islam—that various features of Islamic belief and practice could be identified as contingent human inventions. One thinker who happily combined these two aspects was Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, writing about Islam in his proposal (submitted to Louis XIV in 1672) for a French crusade to conquer Egypt and thereby help bring about the destruction of the Ottoman Empire. 'The Muslims have no revealed dogmas', he asserted. 'All their religion is natural religion, and all their holy worship is political or civil, grounded on reason of state ... It has more or less the same essential character as the Socinian religion, which is

40 Jacob, *Henry Stubbe*, p. 140 (Blount); A. Bury, *The Naked Gospel* (n.p., 1690), sig. A3v; S. Nye, *A Letter of Resolution concerning the Doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation* (n.p., n.d. [1691]), p. 18.

41 John Toland, *Nazarenus*, ed. J. Champion (Oxford, 1999), p. 70: 'the original...'

almost reduced to a pure natural religion, where all revelations and mysteries are either openly rejected or neutralized by interpretation.<sup>42</sup> The same pattern of argument, combining a pure doctrinal content with a set of religious practices designed as political devices, features in the second set of memoirs (of 1740) attributed to the Comte de Bonneval, the French military officer who entered Ottoman service and converted to Islam. Muhammad acted as a 'clever politician', the author wrote, when he permitted polygamy and forbade wine. He also included some elements of all-too-human motivation (such as the promise of a sensual paradise) in order to persuade the Arabs to practise moral virtues. But apart from a few chapters of that kind, the Qur'an had 'nothing that is not founded on the love of God, and of one's neighbour. What he did was to renew the natural law, putting alongside it some legal ceremonies which contribute nothing to salvation, and which had as their only basis a political trick to gain supporters.'<sup>43</sup>

Modern historians sometimes characterize this view of Islam, in the works of late seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century authors, as involving 'deism'—by which is meant a theistic religious belief (or claim of belief) based only on natural theology, without any recourse to revelation. As we have seen, however, the Machiavellian tradition itself was a broader and older phenomenon, and other elements in this picture also had longer histories: particularly, the idea that there was a bedrock of natural theology in Islam, and the association of Islam with the simplificatory 'rational' tendencies of anti-Trinitarianism. Leibniz, for example, needed no impulse from deism in order to describe

42 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 'Justa dissertatio', in his *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*, ed. Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin (Darmstadt and Berlin, 1923–), Reihe 4, 1: 267–382; 372–3: 'Nulla sunt Turcarum dogmata revelata, omnis eorum religio est naturalis, omnis eorum cultus sacer, est politicus seu civilis in status ratione fundatus ... Eadem ferè religionis Sociniana indoles, quae pene reducitur in purè naturalem, omnibus revelationibus ac mysteriis aut apertè rejectis aut interpretatione elusis.' Unusually, Leibniz gave as his authority on Islam the manuscript treatise by Jean Bodin, 'Colloquium heptaplomeres'. This presented Islam as a kind of simplified Judaism, preserving the natural and patriarchal elements it contained; it was better adapted to human psychology, and dispensed with superfluous rites. See Jean Bodin, *Colloquium heptaplomeres de rerum sublimium arcanis abditis*, ed. L. Noack (Schwerin, 1857), passim.

43 'Mr. de Mirone', *Anecdotes vénitiennes et turques, ou nouveaux mémoires du Comte de Bonneval, depuis son arrivée à Venise jusqu'à son exil dans l'isle de Chio, au mois de mars 1739*, 2 vols. ('Londres', 1740), 1: 118–19: 'habile politique', 'rien qui ne soit fondé sur l'amour de Dieu & sur celui du prochain. C'est la Loi naturelle qu'il a renouvelée, mais accompagnée de quelques cérémonies légales qui ne servent de rien au salut, & qui n'ont eu pour fondement qu'une rusée politique pour se faire des partisans.' These memoirs are generally regarded as apocryphal, though the criticisms they make of the previously published *Mémoires* (1737) are in line with what is known of Bonneval's thinking.

Islam as he did. But it is also true that as deism developed from the late seventeenth century onwards, it did play some additional role in the characterization of Islam as a rational religion. One of the key figures here was Henri de Boulainvilliers, whose overall religious views (strongly influenced by his immersion in the philosophy of Spinoza) can reasonably be called deistic.<sup>44</sup> In his *Vie de Mahomed*, composed in 1718–21 and published posthumously in London in 1730, he explained that Islam was 'the fruit of a long and powerful meditation on the nature of things, and on the compatibility of the objects of religion with reason'.<sup>45</sup> Muhammad was a genuine prophet, not in the sense that he predicted the future, but insofar as he expressed divine truths: what he did was to restore an ancient religion based on natural theology (involving such matters as 'the unity and omnipotence of God, [which] are demonstrable by simple human reason') and the natural moral law.<sup>46</sup>

Boulainvilliers's work was influential, partly because it was outspoken and untypical. It helped to form what has been called the eighteenth-century French rationalist 'myth of Muhammad': Diderot's article in the *Encyclopédie* on Arabic philosophy, for example, had a section on Islamic natural theology, and declared that 'Muhammad brought the idolaters back to the knowledge of the unity of God, he secured the foundations of moral science, the distinction of just and unjust, the immortality of the soul, the rewards and punishments to come...'; Condorcet, in his *Esquisse* (1794), would describe Islam as 'the simplest religion in its dogmas, the least absurd in its practices, the most tolerant in its principles'.<sup>47</sup> The most prominent writer to adopt this view was Voltaire;

44 See J.I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 565–74; on his Spinozism see S. Brogi, *Il cerchio dell'universo: libertinismo, spinozismo e filosofia della natura in Boulainvilliers* (Florence, 1993), pp. 137–214.

45 Henri de Boulainvilliers, *La Vie de Mahomed* (London, 1730), p. 226: 'une longue & forte méditation sur la nature des choses ... & sur la compatibilité des objets de la Religion avec la Raison'.

46 *Ibid.*, pp. 31 (restored natural religion), 119 (natural law) 187 (prophet, restoring ancient truths), 253–5 (morality, natural theology, prophet, 254: 'L'unité, & la suprême puissance de DIEU ... sont démonstratives par la simple raison humaine'). It may seem contradictory to associate deism, which ignores revelation, with Islam, which depends on the Qur'an; but the idea was that Muhammad had had the beliefs of a deist, and had devised the Qur'an just as a way of propagating them.

47 M. Petrocchi, 'Il mito di Maometto in Boulainvilliers', *Rivista storica italiana*, 60 (1948), 367–77; Denis Diderot, 'Sarrasins ou Arabes, philosophie des', in *L'Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, ed. D. Diderot and J. le Rond d'Alembert, 28 vols. (Paris, 1751–72), 14: 663–78; 669 (natural theology), 675: 'Mahomet ramena les idolâtres à la connoissance de l'unité de Dieu, il assura les fondemens de la science morale, la distinction du juste & de l'injuste, l'immortalité de l'ame, les recompenses & les chatimens à venir'; Condorcet [Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas de Caritat, mar-

but he did so by fits and starts, as the 'rational' Muhammad alternated in his writings with the fanatic. In his play *Le Fanatisme, ou Mahomet le prophète*, first performed in 1741, his target was religious fanaticism and hypocrisy as such, with Christianity the unacknowledged but obvious target (obvious, belatedly, to the authorities in Paris, who suppressed it in the following year). On the other hand, in an essay on Muhammad and the Qur'an, first published as a supplement to the play in 1748 and later incorporated in the article 'Alcoran' in his *Dictionnaire philosophique*, Voltaire defended the Prophet from the 'stupidities' uttered against him by 'monks' (i.e. Christian theologians); Muhammad had introduced good laws and had taught a simple faith in one God, which was true so far as it went and greatly preferable to the idolatry of the time. 'It would have been very difficult for such a simple and wise religion, taught by someone who was always victorious, not to conquer part of the world.' At the same time, however, Muhammad was guilty of stirring up his followers to commit acts of violence (an almost generic fault of religious movements, in Voltaire's eyes).<sup>48</sup> As Voltaire composed his *Essai sur les mœurs* during the 1750s, the line he took drew closer to that of Boulainvilliers. Muhammad was not an ignorant man; he was a sincere enthusiast, who 'in the end imposed, by means of necessary tricks, a doctrine which he believed to be good', restoring a simple faith in both the unity of God and rewards in a future life. But this account also commented on the 'incoherent declamations' and contradictions of the Qur'an.<sup>49</sup> It was only in his late writings that Voltaire seemed fully to adopt the 'deistic' interpretation of Islam, in which whatever might have seemed irrational in the Qur'an was simply overlooked: writing in 1767, he described Islam as 'more reasonable than Christianity', and declared that 'it was simple theism, the natural religion, and therefore the only true one'.<sup>50</sup>

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quis de], *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1795), p. 165: 'la plus simple dans ses dogmes, la moins absurde dans ses pratiques, la plus tolérante dans ses principes'.

48 Voltaire [François-Marie Arouet], 'De l'Alcoran et de Mahomet', ed. A. Gunny, in Voltaire, *Les Oeuvres complètes*, ed. N. Cronk et al., 20B (Oxford, 2003), pp. 327–42; 335–6: 'moines', 'sottises', 'Il était bien difficile, qu'une religion si simple et si sage enseignée par un homme toujours victorieux ne subjuguât pas une partie de la terre', 339 (violence).

49 Voltaire [François-Marie Arouet], *Essai sur les mœurs*, ed. R. Pomeau, 2 vols. (Paris, 1963), 1: 257: 'appuya enfin, par des fourberies nécessaires, une doctrine qu'il croyait bonne', 271–2: 'déclamations incohérentes' (contradictions), 272–3 (simple faith). See also M.G. Badir, *Voltaire et l'Islam* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 164–7.

50 Voltaire [François-Marie Arouet], *Textes sur l'Orient*, 1: *L'Empire Ottoman & le monde arabe*, ed. J.P. Jackson (Tangier, 2006), p. 227: 'plus sensé que le christianisme', 'C'était le

What is fully evident in Voltaire's case is also generally true of all the eighteenth-century writers who took this line, from Toland and Boulainvilliers onwards: the underlying concern was with their own religion in their own society. Praising Islam in these rationalistic terms was a tactic for criticizing Christianity, or at least the Church in its various actions and powers; it could hardly be represented as a contribution to the scholarly study of Islam. Before the close of the previous century, the path-breaking reference work by Barthélemy d'Herbelot, *Bibliothèque orientale*, had pointed out that Islam and deism were quite different things; Voltaire himself was well aware of that judgement by a scholar who had studied a mass of Islamic texts.<sup>51</sup> Boulainvilliers's work was also swiftly controverted by Jean Gagnier, a professor of Arabic whose knowledge of Islam was also derived (unlike Boulainvilliers's) from primary sources.<sup>52</sup> And other scholars of the early eighteenth century, such as Adriaan Reland in Utrecht, were setting out detailed descriptions of Muslim practices and beliefs that had very little in common with the deistic or rationalistic view.<sup>53</sup> In any case, the idea that Islam was a purely rational religion never became the dominant one; it continued to be outweighed, in general European opinion, by the old polemical depiction that was made up of imposture, moral turpitude, ignorance and absurdity. The gradual dismantling, by serious Islamic scholarship in the West, of both that old prejudicial view and the idealized 'rational' one is another, and longer, story.

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simple théisme, la religion naturelle, et par conséquent la seule véritable' (from the supplementary ch. 35 added to his *Examen important de Milord Bolingbroke*).

- 51 Barthélemy d'Herbelot, *Bibliothèque orientale, ou dictionnaire universel, contenant tout ce qui regarde la connoissance des peuples de l'Orient* (Paris, 1697), pp. 295–7; on this point see A. Gunny, *Images of Islam in Eighteenth-Century Writings* (London, 1996), pp. 47–8.
- 52 J. Gagnier, *La Vie de Mahomet; traduite et compilée de l'Alcoran, des traditions authentiques de la Sonna, et des meilleurs auteurs arabes*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1732).
- 53 See A. Hamilton, 'From "a Closet at Utrecht": Adriaan Reland and Islam', *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis*, 78 (1998), pp. 243–50.

## Thomas Erpenius, Oriental Scholarship and the Art of Persuasion

*Arnoud Vrolijk and Joanna Weinberg*

Thomas Erpenius or Van Erpe (Gorcum 1584–Leiden 1624) was the most remarkable and talented Dutch Orientalist of the early seventeenth century. He was the first incumbent of the chair of Arabic at Leiden University—no mean achievement since only two such positions existed in Western Europe at the time (Paris, 1538 and Heidelberg, 1608). On 14 May 1613 he delivered his first inaugural lecture ‘on the excellence and dignity of the Arabic language’.<sup>1</sup> On 5 November 1620, after a prolonged absence in France, Erpenius gave a second oration on the virtues of Arabic.<sup>2</sup> A few days later he received his first, temporary appointment as professor of Hebrew and Aramaic, for which occasion he pronounced yet another discourse on the merits of the Sacred Tongue on 27 November 1620.<sup>3</sup> Erpenius thus left at our disposal three separate official documents, two pertaining to Arabic and one to Hebrew.

More than thirty years ago, Alastair Hamilton wrote:

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- 1 Thomas Erpenius, *Oratio de linguae Arabicae praestantia & dignitate, dicta in illustri Batavorum Academia mense Maio MDCXIII, cum ejus linguae, & aliarum orientalium professionem auspicaretur* (Leiden, [1615 or later]). In this article, however, we shall refer to the reprinted version, ‘Oratio I de lingua Arabica, habita XIII Maij, anno MDCXIII cum ejusdem & aliarum orientalium professionem auspicaretur’, in id., *Orationes tres, de linguarum Ebraeae, atque Arabicae dignitate* (Leiden, 1621), pp. 1–38 (hereafter: Erpenius, *Oratio* 1), with added reference to the 1613 edition.
  - 2 Thomas Erpenius, ‘Oratio II de lingua Arabica, habita v. Novembris, anno MDCXX cum e secundo suo itinere Gallicano reversus, ad praelectiones suas ordinarias rediret’, in id., *Orationes tres*, pp. 39–96 (hereafter: Erpenius, *Oratio* II). This second oration has been translated by R. Jones, ‘Thomas Erpenius (1584–1624) on the Value of the Arabic Language, translated from the Arabic’, *Manuscripts of the Middle East*, 1 (1986), 15–25.
  - 3 Thomas Erpenius, ‘Oratio III de lingua Ebraea, habita XXVII Septembris, anno MDCXX cum ejusdem professionem auspicaretur’, in id., *Orationes tres*, pp. 97–132 (hereafter Erpenius, *Oratio* III). The printed date, 27 September 1620, must be wrong: Erpenius received his first, temporary appointment as professor of Hebrew only on 9 November 1620: see P.C. Molhuysen, ed., *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*, 7 vols. (The Hague, 1913–24), 2: 96; W.M.C. Juynboll, *Zeventiende-eeuwsche beoefenaars van het Arabisch in Nederland* (Utrecht, [1931]), p. 101 n. 3.



It would be wrong to take too seriously all his [i.e. Erpenius's] statements in the inaugural lecture which he delivered in Leiden on 14 May 1613... . Such orations were intended to attract patronage and the arguments were usually repetitions of traditional commonplaces rather than the true convictions of the speaker... . If we look at what Erpenius actually published we receive a different impression of his objectives. A high proportion of his publications—his grammatical works and bilingual editions of proverbs and fables—had a purely didactic purpose: that of facilitating the study of the language and providing simple texts with which to practice.<sup>4</sup>

By this incisive observation Hamilton opened up a new aspect of Oriental scholarship—the man behind the scholar and, for our purposes, the role of rhetoric in the work of Erpenius. This reflection will serve as a starting point for the present contribution. There can be no doubt that Erpenius deserves his reputation as a talented pioneering scholar of Oriental languages, who in the short lifespan allotted to him published the first useful grammar of the Arabic language and other works on Hebrew and Syriac for the use of his students. He was praised for his qualities as a teacher. But what were the rhetorical devices employed by Erpenius to establish, defend and improve his position? What do the orations tell us about his self-representation as an Arabist and Hebraist in relation to his fellow scholars and the 'Curators and Burgomasters', who held the strings of power at the young university? And do we detect any differences in his approach to Arabic vis-à-vis Hebrew? Before comparing the three orations, we shall first examine how Erpenius tried to manipulate both his superiors and his readers. Finally, we shall devote further attention to Erpenius's competence and status as a Hebraist, an aspect of his scholarly activity which is largely overshadowed by his lasting fame as an Arabist.

4 A. Hamilton, 'Arabic Studies in the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *Philologia Arabica: Arabische studiën en drukken in de Nederlanden in de 16e en 17e eeuw*, ed. F. De Nave (Antwerp, 1986), pp. xciv–cviii, at p. cii. For Alastair Hamilton's other studies on Erpenius, for instance in relation to Isaac Casaubon, see his 'Isaac Casaubon the Arabist: Video longum esse iter', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 72 (2009), 143–68, and id., 'The Long Apprenticeship: Casaubon and Arabic', in A. Grafton and J. Weinberg, *I have always loved the Hebrew Tongue: Isaac Casaubon, the Jews, and a Forgotten Chapter in Renaissance Scholarship* (Cambridge MA etc., 2011), pp. 293–306, at pp. 300–301, 303, 305.

## 1 Erpenius the Arabist

At the University of Leiden power lay in the hands of the 'Curators and Burgomasters' (*Curatoren en Burgemeesters*), a board of seven men with close ties to the government on various levels. All four burgomasters of Leiden sat on the board during their one-year term of office. The first curator was invariably selected from the nobility (*ridderschap*); when Erpenius was nominated in 1613, this was Adriaan, lord of Mathenesse (1563–1621). The second curator, Johan de Groot (1554–1640), was burgomaster of Delft and the third, Cornelis van der Mijle (c. 1579–1642) was a member of the States of the province of Holland, a diplomat and son-in-law of Grand Pensionary Johan van Oldenbarneveldt.<sup>5</sup> The board was ultimately subservient to the provincial government of Holland and in the background loomed the figure of Stadtholder Maurice of Nassau, whose opinion could not be ignored.<sup>6</sup> The curators were prominent men as servants of the State, but were also closely connected to the academic establishment of Leiden: Johan de Groot was the father of the jurist and Leiden professor Hugo Grotius, and Van der Mijle ('Mylius') had been a favourite pupil of Joseph Scaliger, the doyen of Oriental studies at Leiden. Erpenius's position had already been ratified by the curators when he gave his public oration.

Erpenius's first Arabic oration of 1613 culminated in the assertion that a sound knowledge of the language was indispensable to 'bring back to Christ those who have been seduced by the Ishmaelite impostor Muhammad', and to understand and refute the causes of the 'vainest superstitions and crassest heresies with which they have been infected'.<sup>7</sup> According to Wilhelmina Juynboll, the eminent historian of early Arabic studies in the Netherlands, this statement of Erpenius proclaimed the missionary purpose of his Arabic studies and also pointed to the reason as to why the Chair in Arabic was established

5 P.C. Molhuysen et al., eds., *Nieuw Nederlandsch biografisch woordenboek*, 10 vols. (Leiden, 1911–37), 8: 1192–8.

6 R. Sluijter, *Tot circaet, vermeerderinge ende heerlyckmaeckinge der universiteyt: Bestuur, instellingen, personeel en financiën van de Leidse universiteit, 1575–1812* (Hilversum, 2004), pp. 17–61, 284.

7 Erpenius, *Oratio* I, p. 37 (ed. 1613: sig. E1): 'Sed ad ipsam linguam revertamur, cujus notitiam Christianis nobis valde utilem, imo necessariam esse, ad convincendos, & ad Christum reducendos tot tantosque populos, ab impostore illo Ismaelico seductos, vel hinc quilibet facile colligat, quod sine ea ne intellegi quidem, nedum utiliter confutari possint vanissimarum superstitionum, & crassissimarum haeresium quibus infecti sunt rationes.' On Erpenius's missionary intentions see P.T. van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century: Constantijn L'Empereur (1591–1648), Professor of Hebrew and Theology at Leiden* (Leiden etc., 1989), pp. 59–63.

in the first place.<sup>8</sup> It does seem, however, that religion never played a role in the decision to promote the study of Arabic in Leiden. According to the extant university records, ‘the study of Arabic would be of service to students of medicine and other faculties’; there is no mention of *Philologia Sacra* or the refutation of Islam. Instead, it is stated that some years previously they had already decided to found a chair for Arabic ‘to enhance the prestige of the University’.<sup>9</sup> This refers to August 1599, when the converted Jew Philip Ferdinand from Poland, Scaliger’s beloved teacher, was given a temporary position as lecturer of Arabic. In the records for 1599 secretary Nicolaas van Zeyst had noted down that the Curators and Burgomasters had approved the nomination, ‘considering ... that the inhabitants of these lands [i.e. the Dutch Republic], on account of the East Indian trade, shall be well disposed towards learning the Arabic tongue, which is much used in those parts’. For all practical purposes, this reflects nothing but a keen interest in prospective business opportunities in Southeast Asia.<sup>10</sup> On neither occasion was there any mention of the usefulness

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- 8 Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, p. 76: Wilhelmina Juynboll presented her work on 17th-century Dutch Arabists as a doctoral thesis to the University of Utrecht. Apparently, the issue of converting Indonesian Muslims to Christianity for the benefit of early Dutch colonial expansion played a role of some importance at that university. As late as 1941, only a year before the Japanese occupation, the Utrecht professor J.W.A. Kernkamp wrote that the colonization and administration of the East Indies would have run much more smoothly if Islam and paganism had been exterminated immediately upon the arrival of the Dutch in the archipelago. After World War II, Kernkamp, a Christian Democrat, became minister for Overseas Territories. See J.W.A. Kernkamp, ‘Regeering en Islam’, in *Daar wèrd wat groots verricht...: Nederlandsch-Indië in de xxste eeuw*, ed. W.H. van Helsdingen et al. (Amsterdam, 1941), pp. 191–207/191. We owe this observation to Hans van de Velde, whose help we gratefully acknowledge.
- 9 Leiden, University Library, MS Archief van Curatoren 1, no. 20, Resolutiën van Curatoren ende Burgemeesters, 9 February 1613, fol. 336r: ‘Ende alzoo al over eenige Jaaren de Curateurs ende Burgemeesteren geraden gevonden hadden de Universiteit te doen floreeren met de Arabische ende andere Orientaelsche taelen, ten einde dat alzoo daar mede de Universiteit te vermaerder zoude mogen worden, ende anderdeels ook de Studenten in medicina ende andere faculteiten daarmede in hare studien gedient zoude mogen weezen.’ Only the barest details are in Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, 2: 48.
- 10 Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, 1: 120–21: ‘Considererende..., dat de ingesetenen deser landen, mits de Oost-Indische scipvaart, genegen sullen sijn die Arabische spraecke, die aldaer veel gebruyct wort, te leeren’; see also Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, p. 52. Ferdinand appears to have passed his first test satisfactorily, for on 8 November 1599 he was appointed extraordinary professor of Arabic for a term of three years, starting on 8 February 1600, the *dies natalis* of the university. Unfortunately, the appointee died in December 1599 before he could take up his position. On Philip Ferdinand see H.F. Wijnman, ‘Philippus Ferdinandus: Professor in het Arabisch aan de Leidse Universiteit, de eerste Oost-Europese Jood in Nederland (1559)’, *Jaarbericht van het Vooraziatisch-Egyptisch Genootschap ‘Ex Oriente*

of Arabic for the conversion of the Muslims; indeed, it is highly unlikely that Erpenius ever discussed this topic with his employers.

### 1.1 *Carving out a Career*

Thomas Erpenius's appointment as professor had not gone without a hitch. When he returned to Leiden from his travels abroad in 1612, the Mennonite Jan Theunisz or Johannes Anthonides, an innkeeper from Amsterdam, was teaching Arabic at Leiden on an informal and temporary basis. Erpenius was doubtless the better Arabist of the two and could also rally the support of powerful members of the university such as Daniel Heinsius and Hugo Grotius. In a letter of 13 July 1612 to Isaac Casaubon, his former mentor in Paris, Erpenius completely destroyed Theunisz's reputation in a flood of diverse allegations. He wrote that although he had never set eyes on Theunisz, he would 'say nothing' about his proficiency in Arabic, that he had heard that Theunisz was an Anabaptist, a former 'servant' of the Leiden Orientalist and printer Franciscus Raphelengius, and that his Latin was so poor that the university had forbidden him to lecture in the academy, and that he sold gin in Amsterdam. Though this man was ruining his brilliant prospects, it was far beneath Erpenius to pull the rug from under anyone's feet. Casaubon, who knew his rhetoric, was quick to understand the purport of the message and wrote to Heinsius and Grotius in Leiden with an urgent recommendation to nominate Erpenius as professor of Arabic instead of 'that illiterate' ('illum ἀγράμματον'). Against such an impressive display of power, Theunisz stood helpless, and he was eventually dismissed with a farewell bonus of 250 guilders.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, Erpenius's first appointment was a modest one in terms of both status and money. He began as an extraordinary professor in the lowest-ranking faculty of Arts, with a yearly stipend of 500 guilders. An ordinary professor in any of the 'great' faculties (Theology, Law and Medicine) could easily earn twice as much. But in 1620, seven years after his first appointment, his

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*Lux*, 19 (1965–6), 558–80; A. Hamilton, 'Ferdinand, Philip (1556–1599)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), online via <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9308>>.

11 H.F. Wijnman, 'De Hebraïcus Jan Theunisz. Barbarossius alias Johannes Antonides als lector in het Arabisch aan de Leidse Universiteit (1612/1613): Een hoofdstuk Amsterdamse geleerdengeschiedenis', *Studia Rosenthaliana*, 2 (1968), 1–29, 149–77, at 156–8. For the text of Erpenius's letter to Casaubon see T.J. ab Almeloveen, ed., *Isaaci Casauboni epistolae, insertis ad easdem responsionibus, quotquot hactenus reperiri potuerunt...* (Rotterdam, 1709), p. 666: 'Quid possit, non queam dicere; non enim conveni hominem, nec facile conveniam, ne videar ejus luci velle tenebras offundere, eumque de loco suo deturbare.' For Casaubon's commitment to do everything necessary to dislodge Theunisz. see *ibid.*, p. 477.

fixed salary was still only 100 guilders higher than it had been in 1613.<sup>12</sup> Writing from France on 14 July 1620, he deployed all his rhetorical skills in a lengthy request for a rise in which he set off his meagre income ('which, as Your Honours well know, does not really help to keep house in Leiden') against his considerable merits as a professor and printer of Oriental languages. P.C. Molhuysen thought this epistle so remarkable that he printed it *in extenso* in his *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis der Leidsche Universiteit*. Erpenius complained, flattered and cajoled, hoping that the Curators would 'recompense his extraordinary courage with an extraordinary remuneration'. Nor was he averse to cracking a joke in the company of gentlemen who knew the value of money by making a solemn 'Dr Faustus promise' that he would not buy land with the extra salary. If Erpenius was Faustus, then the Curators were the devil, but he must have thought they would take it in good humour.<sup>13</sup> The trick worked: in 1620 he also obtained the professorship for Hebrew and Aramaic, and his yearly stipend was fixed at 1000 guilders for both positions combined. By 1624, the year of his death, his salary had increased to 1200 guilders per year, far beyond the amount any other professor in the faculty of Arts could reasonably expect. And yet, Erpenius had not always managed to get what he demanded—this is made clear by the piqued reply of the Curators and Burgomasters to the request for a rise in 1617: 'The University is not in such great need of his profession...; and if he thinks he can seek his advantage elsewhere, then we shall not prevent him.'<sup>14</sup>

### 1.2 *The Rhetorical Dimension of Erpenius's Publications*

Alastair Hamilton was certainly correct in concluding that Erpenius's professed motives for teaching Arabic as expounded in his first oration were mere tropes when compared with the books he actually published. How shall we take the measure of a scholar if not by his books? As we have seen, Erpenius

12 On the development of Erpenius's career and income see Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, pp. 96–7, 100–101.

13 Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, 2: 181\*–3\*. Erpenius literally made a 'Wagenaers belofte' ('Wagner's promise'), most likely a reference to the popular Dutch chapbook *Die Historie van Christoffel Wagenaer, discipel van D. Johannes Faustus*, first published in Utrecht in 1597 and again in 1607, 1608 and 1614. It is a translation of the German *Wagnerbuch*, which appeared in 1593 as a 'sequel' or adaptation of the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten* (1587). Erpenius implies in a facetious way that he is making a promise he cannot break at the risk of forfeiting his soul. For an edition and study of the text see J. Fritz, ed., *Die historie van Christoffel Wagenaer, discipel van D. Johannes Faustus: Naar den Utrechtschen druk van Reynder Wyllicx uit het jaar 1597* (Leiden, 1913).

14 Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, p. 96: 'dat syne professie soo noodich nyet en is in de Universiteit ... ofte andersints de H.C. ende B. hem nyet en sullen beletten dat hy sijn vordel ende advancement soecke, daer hy meynen sal 't selve te vinden.'

had insisted in his first oration that a sound knowledge of Arabic was indispensable for the refutation of Islam. In his funeral oration for Erpenius from 1624, Gerardus Johannes Vossius expressed his conviction that 'he was going to take the first opportunity in order to edit the Qur'an, or the law of the Muhammadans, in Arabic as well as in Latin' ['Receperat etiam se prima occasione divulgaturum Alcoranum, sive Muhammedanorum legem, & Arabice, & Latine']. This was going to be a work of staggering comprehensiveness, containing not only an edition of the Arabic text with a Latin translation, but also an elaborate refutation drawn from the most authoritative Christian and Jewish sources, together with a three-volume study of Islam, its Prophet and the Muslim empire, as well as confessions of the Islamic faith from diverse regions—including one in 'Malay' [sic] which he intended to translate into Latin—indexes, et cetera, et cetera.<sup>15</sup> Evidently, the occasion never presented itself and, given the projected scale of the work, one wonders if it was ever anything but a castle in the air. No trace remains of a draft or any preparatory notes. The only tangible contributions of Erpenius to the field of Qur'anic studies are his edition of Sura 12 *Yūsuf* 'Joseph' of 1617,<sup>16</sup> and the much shorter edition of Sura 64 *al-Taghābun* 'The Mutual Disillusion' as part of his *Rvdimenta lingvae Arabicae* of 1620.<sup>17</sup> These partial editions, however, contain no refutation of the Qur'an, apart from the usual negative epithets of Islam and its Prophet such as ridiculous, false, mendacious, pestiferous and perverse. Erpenius's works are purely linguistic documents for the use of students and do not betray any sign that he had actually intended to write a full-length refutation of the Qur'an.<sup>18</sup> The extant publications serve as further confirmation that his missionary zeal, as expressed in his first Arabic oration, was simply a rhetorical device intended to serve the expectations of his academic audience.

15 Gerardus Johannes Vossius, *Oratio in obitum... Thomae Erpenii, Orientalium linguarum in Academia Leidensi professoris: Habita statim ab exsequiis in auditorio Theologico, xv Novemb. anno MDCXXIV...* (Leiden, 1625), pp. 25–6; Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, pp. 110–11.

16 Thomas Erpenius, *Sūrat Yūsuf wa-tahjji al-'Arab: Historia Josephi patriarchae, ex Alcorano, Arabice: Cum triplici versione Latina, & scholiis Thomae Erpenii, cujus & alphabetum Arabicum praemittitur* (Leiden, 1617).

17 Thomas Erpenius, 'Exercitatio grammatica lingvae Arabicae in caput Alcorani LXIV, quod inscribitur capvt Fravdationis', in id., *Rvdimenta lingvae Arabicae: Accedunt ejusdem praxis grammatica; & consilium de studio Arabico feliciter instituendo* (Leiden, 1620), sigs. M5r–P4r.

18 On Erpenius's use of the Qur'an as a linguistic teaching aid see A. Hamilton, 'The Qur'an as Chrestomathy in Early Modern Europe', in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe*, ed. J. Loop, A. Hamilton and C. Burnett (Leiden etc., 2017), pp. 213–29, at pp. 215–19.

Likewise, other books by Erpenius show that he was resourceful in manipulating his arguments for the sake of expediency. In 1615, for example, he published the first edition from his own press, the *Fables* of Luqmān together with a selection of 100 proverbs.<sup>19</sup> With regard to this endeavour, Erpenius readily admitted that he did not yet have all the Arabic vowel signs, a technical complication which involved the use of additional lines of type above and below the regular font. But this was all for the best, so he argued, because it gave students an opportunity to get used to real Arabic printed books or manuscripts, since most of these are written without the vowel signs. In contrast to Hebrew, he continued, the vowel system of Arabic is so simple and consistent that one does not really need the special signs to read or understand the text.<sup>20</sup> But by 1617 Erpenius had mastered this technical problem, and he proudly announced the introduction of the vowels in his newest book, the edition of *Sūrat Yūsuf*. This time he made the point that the vowels were an indispensable aid for understanding the text:

Please accept, young students, the *tahajjī* or *Alphabet* of my Arabic types you have been waiting for so long, together with all the nobler ligatures and accents of the letters. This will greatly facilitate you in dealing not only with the books that I have published or the Roman prints, but also the handwritten books of the Arabs (about which you have constantly been complaining that you get entangled in them because of the unfamiliar ductus and ligatures). Indeed, I like to think that in these few pages I have done rather well in explaining the details you require most urgently in order to read these books.<sup>21</sup>

19 Thomas Erpenius, *Amthāl Luqmān al-Ḥakīm wa-ba'ḍ aqwāl al-'Arab: Locmani sapientis fabvlae et selecta qvaedam Arabvm adagia: Cum interpretatione Latina & notis* (Leiden, 1615).

20 Erpenius, *Locmani sapientis fabvlae*, sigs. A7v–8r: 'Puncta vocalia textui Arabico addita non sunt, tum quod typi nostri ijs plene nondum sunt instructi, tum quod consultum videatur paulo provectoribus materiam suppeditare in qua sine vocalibus sese exercent, librosque ijs destitutos, quales plerique sunt, prompte et legere et intelligere discant; quod ut in Hebraea lingua est difficillimum, ita in hac, ob vocalium paucitatem & constantiam, multo facillimum.'

21 Erpenius, *Historia Iosephi*, sig. A2: 'Accipite tantopere a vobis expetitum, juvenes studiosissimi, Typorum meorum Arabicorum *tahajjiyan* seu *Alphabetum*, cum nobilioribus omnibus literarum nexibus, et accidentibus; quo felicius, non in meae tantum, et Romanae editionis libris, sed et codicibus Arabum, manu exaratis, (in quibus haerere vos subinde, ob ignotos literarum ductus et nexus querebamin) versari possitis, quidquid enim ad illorum lectionem potissimum requiritur, id paucis hisce pagellis, non infeliciter mihi videor expressisse.' Cited in Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, pp. 82–3.

### 1.3 *The Virtues of Arabic*

In his first oration of 1613 Erpenius tried to make a case for the *praestantia* ('excellence') and *dignitas* of Arabic, using criteria such as *antiquitas*, *amplitudo*, *elegantia* and *utilitas*. For Erpenius's contemporaries a language had to be sufficiently old to gain respectability (*antiquitas*). There had to be a considerable number of speakers of that language (*amplitudo*), and it was supposed to be elegant, rich and a delight to the ear (*elegantia*, *copia*, *venustas*), and should not be extremely difficult to learn. Finally, students should be able to profit from a large number of important texts written in that language and the ideas contained within them (*utilitas*).<sup>22</sup> From the sixteenth century onwards, humanists fell back on these general criteria in order to justify scholarly attention for a specific language or to construe a taxonomy of languages, both ancient and modern.<sup>23</sup>

The study of Arabic was in its infancy when Erpenius set out to promote its importance and significance to the Leiden community. Apologetic treatises on Arabic were rare; but from a close reading of the introduction to Guillaume Postel's *Grammatica Arabica* (c. 1538) Erpenius had become familiar with certain categories that were to be cast as the defining features of Arabic. He had bought the grammar in 1609 during his stay in Paris.<sup>24</sup> Scrutinizing the preface, where Postel summed up his arguments for studying Arabic, Erpenius had underlined several passages and noted in the margin 'Linguae Arabicae Amplitudo–Vtilitas–Necessitas'.<sup>25</sup> In his oration we also find him repeating Postel's main points: the spread of the Arabic language, even to Mexico; the usefulness of the many works of Galen, Aristotle and Avicenna; and the role of the Council of Vienne (1311), where Pope Clement V had ordered the foundation of Arabic chairs at selected universities in Europe. Erpenius's immediate predecessor Jan Theunisz had proffered similar arguments in his letter to the Curators and

22 Erpenius, *Oratio* 1, pp. 5–6 (ed. 1613: sigs. A3v–4r): 'Solent autem, ut rem aggrediar, qui linguam aliquam commendandam suscipiunt urgere imprimis ejus Antiquitatem, Amplitudinem, Elegantiam, & Vtilitatem.'

23 T. Van Hal, *Moedertalen en taalmoeders: het vroegmoderne taalvergelijkende onderzoek in de Lage Landen* (Brussels, 2010), pp. 423–7. Several of these criteria were already known in classical antiquity; see, e.g. T. Fögen, *Patrii sermonis egestas: Einstellungen lateinischer Autoren zu ihrer Muttersprache. Ein Beitrag zum Sprachbewußtsein in der römischen Antike* (München etc., 2000). We are grateful to Drs Lucien van Beek and Casper de Jonge (Leiden University), who supplied us with this reference.

24 G. Postel, *Grammatica Arabica* (Paris, c. 1538). See the notice on the second flyleaf of the Leiden University Library copy 876 C 8: 'Emptus Parisiis A° 1609 2 flor. 10 st. a Thoma Erpenio' ('Bought by Thomas Erpenius in Paris in the year 1609 for 2 guilders and 10 stuivers').

25 *Ibid.*, sigs. D2r–D3r.



Burgomasters of Leiden University of 1611, entitled *Doctissimorum quorundam hominum, de Arabicae linguae antiquitate dignitate et utilitate testimonia publica*. This rare mixture of print and manuscript (in a fairly accomplished *maghribi* hand) served not only as a specimen of his competence in Arabic, but also as a brief schematic survey of passages on the qualities of Arabic garnered from the writings of the foremost Orientalists of Europe such as Jacob Christmann, Guy Le Fèvre de la Boderie, Joseph Scaliger, Rutger Spey, Nicolaes Cleynaerts and Jean Mercier. It must be assumed that Erpenius knew about this little work.<sup>26</sup>

#### 1.4 *Hebrew Orations as a Model for Arabic*

Erpenius's 1613 oration on Arabic brings to mind the terminology and arguments of the early sixteenth-century Hebraists.<sup>27</sup> An elaborate defence of Hebrew, for example, is to be found in the oration of the English scholar Robert Wakefield (d. 1537), delivered in 1524, when he accepted his nomination as professor of Hebrew and other Oriental languages at the University of Cambridge: *Roberti Wakefeldi sacrarum literarum professoris eximij oratio de laudibus & utilitate trium linguarum Arabicae, Chaldaicae & Hebraicae, atque idiomatibus hebraicis quae in utroque testamento inveniuntur*:

No one, unless he is stupid, mad, insane or crazy, can deny that the Hebrew language, which is so dear to God and closely associated with him, and so holy, useful and necessary, surpasses all the rest. It does so because of its divine method of expression, its efficacious and genuine eloquence, the ease with which it can be learned, its renown, honour, purity, modesty, antiquity, regularity, conciseness, perfection, its wealth of senses, its host of meanings, synonyms and words of significance, its sanctity, structure, usefulness, its admirable ability to express arcane subjects, and its instruction about the nature of God.<sup>28</sup>

26 Johannes Antonius Alcmarianus, *Doctissimorum quorundam hominum, de Arabicae linguae antiquitate dignitate et utilitate testimonia publica: Vna cum interpretatione Latina partis Azoarum primae Alcorani ad verbum elaborata & in gratiam illius linguae studiosorum edita...* (Amsterdam, 1611), Leiden, University Library, MS Or. 14.314.

27 Van Rooden, *Theology*, pp. 57, 59–60.

28 G. Lloyd Jones, ed., *Robert Wakefield on the Three Languages (1524)* (Binghamton, 1989), pp. 180 (English)—181 (Latin): 'nullusque ni insulsus, demens, vesanus aut phanaticus fuerit negare potest, hebraicam linguam tam deo gratam ac familiarem, tamque sanctam, utilem et necessariam, divino dicendi genere, efficaci et vera eloquentia, discendi facilitate, nobilitate, dignitate, puritate, pudicitia, vetustate, ordine, brevitate, perfectione, sensuum fecunditate, significantiarum ac synonymarum aequivocarumque dictionum copia, sanctitate, inventione, utilitate, operationis arcanae admirabili potentia, disci-

This method of describing the advantages of Hebrew persisted throughout the sixteenth century. Although it cannot be proved that the Hebraists were aware of each and every Hebrew oration of their predecessors or contemporaries, it is evident that certain tropes and expressions had become *de rigueur* in the rhetorical representation of Hebrew. In 1579, for instance, Franciscus Junius the Elder (1545–1602) accepted a position at the Reformed academy of Neustadt an der Haardt by giving an inaugural lecture entitled *De lingvae Hebraeae antiquitate, praestantiaque oratio*.<sup>29</sup> Although it predates Erpenius's oration by 34 years, Junius had close relations with the University of Leiden, where he taught theology and subsequently also Hebrew from 1592 until his death.<sup>30</sup>

Even closer to his own time, Erpenius may have found a very useful expression of the virtues of Hebrew in a public discourse by the colourful Westphalian scholar Hermann Rennecher; it was published in 1603, only ten years before his own. Rennecher or Rennecherus (1550–after 1605) was the first professor of Hebrew at Leiden University from 1575 until 1578, when he was dismissed on account of his indecent behaviour and frequent tavern brawls.<sup>31</sup> In 1603 he returned to Leiden for a brief spell and gave a public lecture to mark the occasion. In this oration he extolled the Sacred Tongue as far superior to all other languages in antiquity, dignity, sanctity, purity, utility, necessity, facility, conciseness and pleasantness.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, as we have seen, Erpenius was able to do more than simply adopt the rhetorical techniques of his fellow scholars from neighbouring

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plinaque divinitatis caeteris omnibus antestare.' Lloyd Jones translates the last words as 'and its knowledge of the godhead'. See the original edition London: apud VVinandum de Vorde, [1524], sig. Nir. See also S.G. Burnett, *Christian Hebraism in the Reformation Era (1550–1600): Authors, Books, and the Transmission of Jewish Learning* (Leiden, 2012), pp. 20–21.

29 Franciscus Junius, *De lingvae Hebraeae antiquitate, praestantiaque oratio: Habita in ilvstri schola neapolitana a Francisco Iunio Biturige* (Neapoli [i.e. Neustadt a/d Haardt], 1579).

30 C.A. Siegenbeek van Heukelom-Lamme et al., *Album scholasticum Academiae Lugduno-Batavae MDLXXV–MCMXL* (Leiden, 1941), p. 81.

31 J.C.H. Lebram, 'Hebräische Studien zwischen Ideal und Wirklichkeit an der Universität Leiden in den Jahren 1575–1619', *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 56, 1 (1975), 317–57, at 321, 327–30.

32 Hermannus Rennecherus, *Oratio brevis et succincta, in laudem Sanctae & Reuerendae Hebraeae lingvae, in celeberrima Batauorum Academia, 19 Nouembr. Anno 1603 publice habita* (Leiden, 1603), sig. B1r: 'Quandoquidem Hieronymus...minime ignorauit, quod haec veneranda lingua [i.e. Hebrew, A.V.] sua antiquitate & dignitate, sua sanctitate & castitate, sua utilitate cum conjuncta necessitate, suaque facilitate & breuitate, & jucunditate, denique sua admiranda pulcherrimarum Phrasium elegantia & majestate omnis totius generis humani linguas multis parasangis superet & antecellat.'

disciplines. Whereas Robert Wakefield had chosen the heavy-handed approach of dismissing all those who denied the superiority of Hebrew as fools and dunces, Erpenius preferred a more refined strategy. Speaking in the intimate atmosphere of the small auditorium of Leiden University, he readily admitted that most people (*plerique*) are enemies of the Arabic language: 'they say that Arabic is coarse, ugly, useless and unworthy of study, but I will demonstrate to you that the opposite is true'. Thus, the enemies of Arabic, though constituting the overwhelming majority, remain anonymous outside the auditorium. They are beyond redemption. On the other hand, the scholars and students inside are extolled as the select few who are able to see the elegance and usefulness of the most superior Arabic language.<sup>33</sup> But Erpenius would not have been the man he was if he had not added a sting to his *captatio benevolentiae*: 'If Arabic really were useless, then the administrators of this university would have shown lack of wisdom by appointing me.'<sup>34</sup>

### 1.5 *Arabic versus Hebrew*

Erpenius went beyond the use of the Hebrew orations as a pattern book for his apologia for the Arabic language. If he had strictly followed the Hebrew model, he would have kept Arabic within the boundaries of an auxiliary science of Hebrew; but in his 1613 oration he applied his rhetorical skills to set off Arabic *against* Hebrew. Exposing the sacred language of Scripture to criticism, either implicit or explicit, he compared it negatively with Arabic. A few examples will suffice:

- After the 'Confusion of the Tongues' Arabic preserved its purity and refinement within the confines of Arabia for about three thousand years, unadulterated by any barbaric influence of exotic words and phrases. By implication this means that Hebrew was exposed to corruption, and consequently became inferior to Arabic.<sup>35</sup>

33 Erpenius, *Oratio* I, p. 4 (ed. 1613: sig. A3r): 'Caeterum cum praestantissimae Arabum Linguae (ut de reliquis impraesentiarum taceam) elegantia & utilitas quam paucissimis perspecta sit: quin plerique eam ut barbaram horridam & incultam explodant, aut veluti inutilem & supervacaneam studio & cognitione indignam judicent.'

34 *Ibid.*, p. 5 (ed. 1613: sig. A3v): 'ne quis in Amplissimis Curatoribus ejus professione Academiam suam instrumentibus atque ornamentibus sapientiam, & in me eam docere parante saniolem mentem desideret.'

35 Erpenius, *Oratio* I, p. 9 (ed. 1613: sig. B1r): 'Sermo Arabicus in usu fuit, & excultus, purusque ab omni Barbarie, id est, vocum & phrasium exoticarum commixtione, adeoque in primitivo suo nitore conservatus, & limitibus Arabiae conclusus, annos plus minus ter mille.' On the relative 'purity' of Arabic versus Hebrew see J. Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger: Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 9, 81–2.

- Because of its superior charm, elegance and facility, even the Jews and Samaritans themselves have often preferred Arabic to Hebrew, as is testified by the countless number of books written by them in that language. And this was not because of their ignorance of Hebrew, as one might be tempted to think: not only authors such as the great Saadiah Gaon and Maimonides, but many others besides knew Hebrew perfectly but nevertheless wrote mostly in Arabic.<sup>36</sup>
- The grammatical structure of Arabic is crystal clear, but Hebrew is full of ambiguities. Sailing close to the wind, Erpenius expressed his conviction that there would have been far fewer differences of opinion between the interpreters of the Bible if only Hebrew had possessed the clear and regular syntactical and inflectional structure of Arabic (and he stopped just short of actually saying that the Old Testament should have been written in Arabic instead of Hebrew).<sup>37</sup>

### 1.6 *Harmony Restored*

In contrast, Erpenius's second Arabic oration from 5 November 1620 conspicuously avoids presenting Arabic and Hebrew in antagonistic terms. It is, as Robert Jones has already noted, largely dedicated to a broad survey of the history of the Arabs and their impressive cultural heritage and Erpenius's ambitious programme of text editions.<sup>38</sup> Erpenius repeats the theme that Arabic was confined to the Arabian Peninsula, but there is no mention of its refinement or purity as compared with Hebrew.<sup>39</sup> Arabic sheds much light on Hebrew, especially on the more obscure words in the Old Testament, which has been transmitted in a mutilated form, but this negative qualification does not extend to the Hebrew language as such.<sup>40</sup> Arabic is the easiest of all renowned

36 Erpenius, *Oratio* I, pp. 18–19 (ed. 1613: sig. C1): 'Iudaeos autem & Samaritanos ipsi etiam Ebraeae linguae Arabicam non raro praeferre testantur infiniti ea ab ipsis conscripti libri: nec id ignorantia Ebraeismi, ut fortassis arbitremini. literarum Ebraicarum peritissimi fuere magnus ille Saadiah Gaon, & Rambam, seu Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, ...alijque multi, qui libros tamen plerosque suos Arabice conscripsere.'

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 21–2 (ed. 1613: sig. C2).

38 Jones, 'Thomas Erpenius', p. 15.

39 Erpenius, *Oratio* II, p. 49; Jones, 'Thomas Erpenius', p. 17.

40 Erpenius, *Oratio* II, p. 69: 'Non enim hoc volo, Auditores, ut voces Ebraeae ab Arabicis deriventur; sed ut vocum obscuriorum vires atque origines in lingua Ebraea, quae mutila & exigua tantum sui parte in veteris Testamenti libris reliqua est, ex iisdem extantibus in Arabum lingua, quae integra adhuc est, ... illustrentur atque explicantur.' We are grateful to Charles Burnett, who suggested the following translation: 'I do not mean by this, dear audience, that Hebrew words are derived from Arabic, but that the meanings and origins of the more obscure words in the Hebrew language, which is left mutilated and only with a small part of itself in the books of the Old Testament, may be illustrated and explained

languages, and more regular than Hebrew or Greek, but Erpenius keeps silent about the famous Jewish authors who preferred Arabic to Hebrew. Likewise, the quarrels between the exegetes of the Bible have vanished. Arabic is an easy language to learn—Erpenius proffers this fact only to buttress his main point that knowledge of Hebrew is not a prerequisite for learning Arabic.<sup>41</sup> Evidently, he wanted to attract students from the faculties of Law, Medicine and Arts who had no previous knowledge of Hebrew. Interestingly, this is exactly the opposite of what Robert Wakefield had said almost a century before in 1524: ‘Whoever attempts Arabic...without first sampling Hebrew, has got his priorities wrong. He will labour in vain and will be rolling the stone of Sisyphus.’<sup>42</sup> Again, Erpenius swept aside the conventions for the sake of expediency.

Most likely, Erpenius's volte-face was determined by his new status as professor of Hebrew as well as Arabic. In May 1613 he had to create a position for himself in competition with the professor of Hebrew, his own teacher Guglielmus Coddæus, or Willem van der Codde. Less than a week before the oration, it had needed a special decision of the Curators and Burgomasters, probably at the instigation of Coddæus himself, to bar Erpenius from teaching *Lingua Sacra*; so there was nothing to prevent Erpenius from seasoning his lecture with criticism of the Hebrew language.<sup>43</sup> In November 1620 there was no such need, because Erpenius knew that Coddæus would be suspended on account of his heterodox Remonstrant beliefs and that a decision from the Burgomasters and Curators was imminent to appoint him professor of Hebrew in his stead on a temporary basis. A few months later, in February 1621, Coddæus was dismissed, and Erpenius officially appointed in May.<sup>44</sup> Under these new circumstances, there was no need to pit Arabic against Hebrew. Throughout both orations, however, Erpenius presented Arabic as a language in its own right, whether in

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by the same words that still exist in the Arabic language, which is still complete'; cf. Jones, 'Thomas Erpenius', p. 21; see also Loop, *Hottinger*, p. 75.

41 Erpenius, *Oratio* II, pp. 88–93; Jones, 'Thomas Erpenius', p. 24.

42 Lloyd Jones, *Robert Wakefield*, pp. 214–17: 'Et revera quicumque hanc linguam...aut syram aggreditur, non prius degustato hebraeo, praeposterum prosequitur ordinem et laterem lavabit Sisiphique lapidem volvet.'

43 Leiden, University Library, MS Archief van Curatoren 1, no. 20, Resolutiën van Curatoren en Burgemeesters, 8–9 May 1613, fol. 337r; Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, 2: 48.

44 Coddæus was extraordinary professor of Hebrew at Leiden from 8 August 1601 to 10 November 1602, and subsequently ordinary professor until 9 November 1620, when he was suspended on account of his Arminian beliefs. On the same day he was temporarily replaced by Erpenius. He was eventually dismissed on 10 February 1621 and succeeded by Erpenius, who finally received his official appointment as ordinary professor *Linguae Sacrae* on 11 May 1621. See Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, p. 100; Siegenbeek, *Album Scholasticum*, p. 32; Leiden, University Library, MS Archief van Curatoren 1, no. 21, Resolutiën van Curatoren en Burgemeesters, fols. 87v–88v, 97v, 102r; Molhuysen, *Bronnen*, 2: 96, 102–3.

competition with Hebrew or in harmony with it. And although he expressed himself in commonplaces, these were carefully selected and arranged to convey a very personal message.<sup>45</sup>

## 2 Erpenius the Hebraist

The progress of Thomas Erpenius's career and his changing views on the relative value of Arabic versus Hebrew do not, however, enlighten us about his actual status and competence as a Hebraist. To settle this issue, we shall have to return to the auditorium of Leiden University, only three weeks after Erpenius had pronounced his second discourse on the virtues of Arabic:<sup>46</sup>

You gaze at a beautiful artefact executed by an outstanding artisan and are filled with admiration. When you realize that it is painted 'after' Lucas van Leyden, Holbein or another very distinguished painter, which of you in my audience today would not be greatly desirous of seeing the archetype? Would you not be convinced that since the copy is of such beauty, the original would be by far more wonderful... Alternatively, if you actually see the original picture, but on a cloudy day or in fading light, who amongst you would not go to look at it that same midday so that you could see and appreciate all the elements of its beauty and elegance, the product of a highly skilled craftsman...<sup>47</sup>

45 There is good reason to assume that Erpenius's Arabic orations influenced later generations, see O.J. Zwartjes 'De studie van het Arabisch in de zeventiende eeuw: Thomas Erpenius' grammatica vergeleken met de studies van Franciscanen in Zuid-Europa en in het Midden-Oosten', in *De tuin der talen: Taalstudie en taalcultuur in de Lage Landen, 1450–1750*, ed. T. Van Hal et al. (Leuven etc., 2013), pp. 183–212, at pp. 195–7; see also Brianus Waltonus, *Biblicus apparatus, chronologico-topographico-philologicus* (Zurich, 1674), pp. 401–11, at pp. 401–4.

46 On the correct date of Erpenius's Oration on the Hebrew language see above, n. 3. For a brief description of Erpenius as Hebraist, see Van Rooden, *Theology*, pp. 57–64.

47 Erpenius, *Oratio* III, pp. 120–21: 'Quis vestrum est, Auditores, qui si egregii artificis manu, elegantissime pictam videat, atque admiretur tabellam, eamque ex alio Lucae Leidensis, Holbenii, aut alius nobilissimi pictoris opere expressam esse intelligat, non summopere desideret ipsum videre Archetypum, certus cum tantae praestantiae exemplar sit, longe illud fore nobilissimum ... Aut quis vestrum est qui si a principe pictore factam imaginem admirandae pulchritudinis, per nebulam solum, aut dubia luce videat, non ipso meredie eam gestiat intueri, quo perfectionem eius, et omnes elegantiae characteres ab artificiosissima manu ei impressos liquido agnoscere possit et discernere ...'

This highly rhetorical plea on behalf of the archetype or original is not part of a treatise on art, nor is it a Platonic reflection. Rather, these uplifting thoughts are articulated by Erpenius in his inaugural lecture held at the University of Leiden on 27 November 1620. The newly appointed professor of Hebrew is pulling out all the stops, this time, in order to convince his audience of the benefits of learning Hebrew. The appeal of Hebrew lay in the obvious—students would acquire knowledge of the mother of all languages, the key to Holy Scripture. But in this passage Erpenius gave a certain twist to the commonplace idea of the primacy of the Holy Tongue. We encounter here the classical idea of the superiority of the original to which Erpenius's contemporary Franciscus Junius the Younger had devoted a section of his work *On the Painting of the Ancients* (London, 1638).<sup>48</sup> The theory is exemplified by reference to two of the most distinguished and popular painters of the recent past, one of whom, Lucas van Leyden, was most certainly a local hero. Erpenius's pronouncement also contains an allusion to the debate about *imitatio auctoris* summed up by Rembrandt's student Samuel van Hoogstraten: 'Let none imagine that he finds in copies the perfect force of art that is contained in the original works... For this is impossible unless some god were to have blessed the imitator with the same spirit as the master.'<sup>49</sup>

Erpenius combined all these ideas in a rhetorical display that set out to demote all translations or paraphrases of the Old Testament to mere copies, some more deficient than others. In other words, all versions or renderings of the Hebrew Bible are necessarily inadequate for penetrating its inner secrets. Lack of knowledge of Hebrew, Erpenius claimed, led revered Fathers such as Augustine and Gregory the Great to pen completely misleading interpretations of the Psalms in the former's case and Job in the latter's. This panegyric of Hebrew extended to the nature of the language with which Latin could not compete—the presence of the 'suavissimus' definite article in Hebrew was apparently one of the many characteristics that betrayed its perfection. Erpenius, still in rhetorical mode, extended his argument for Hebrew to the Greek New Testament. Once again, contemporary scholarly debate underlies his argument. In a

48 Franciscus Junius, *The Painting of the Ancients, ...Written First in Latine by Franciscus Junius, F.F. And Now by him Englished, with Some Additions and Alterations* (London, 1638), Book 3, chapter 7. Franciscus Junius the Younger (1591–1677), was the son of the professor of Hebrew at Leiden, Franciscus Junius the Elder, and the brother-in-law of Gerardus Johannes Vossius, who wrote the obituary of Erpenius. Junius based his discussion of the topic on several classical sources including Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Diogenes Laertius, Cicero and Quintilian.

49 Cited by T. Weststeijn, *The Visible World: Samuel van Hoogstraten's Art Theory and the Legitimation of Painting in the Dutch Golden Age* (Amsterdam, 2008), p. 131.

sweeping statement he gives a nod in the direction of the scholarly work of his colleagues such as Scaliger and Casaubon who had attempted to assess the Hebraisms of the New Testament when he states that ‘the New Testament, though written in Greek, is actually Hebrew as testified by almost all its phrases and turns of speech ...’<sup>50</sup> From this *ex cathedra* position Erpenius then assured his listeners that the same spirit permeated the Old and New Testament writings. There is no way out, therefore, but to learn Hebrew. In his Hebrew grammar intended for absolute beginners, Erpenius challenged his potential students who, on encountering a few Hebrew words, would exclaim: ‘You cannot expect me to read that—it’s in Hebrew!’<sup>51</sup> In his oration, however, he displayed his Hebraic wares in a seductive manner that could only attract and entice disciples to the study of the Holy Tongue.

As discussed above, many of Erpenius’s arguments on the usefulness and perfection of Hebrew are tropes found in several other examples of the genre. Nevertheless, as we have already indicated, Erpenius was intent on putting his own stamp on the job he had inherited from the previous incumbent of the position, Guglielmus Coddæus, who had been sacked for his Remonstrant beliefs. In Erpenius’s hands the spiritual value of Hebrew is communicated in Midrashic mode, by means not of a scriptural verse but by a popular tale emanating from Thucydides.<sup>52</sup> According to the story, Themistocles spent a year learning Persian so that he could communicate with his patron, the king, without intermediaries. Like a good pastor, Erpenius drew out the moral of the story. Who would not want to communicate with the King of Kings in whose presence each person constantly stands—the duty of the religious person must be to learn God’s language, that is, Hebrew.<sup>53</sup> The conventional notion

50 Erpenius, *Oratio* III, pp. 112–13: ‘... graecis quidem verbis scripta nobis reliquere, sed Ebraice tamen: cum phrases fere omnes, et loquendi formulae, vocum etiam plurium usus, non Graeca sint, sed Ebraea ...’

51 Thomas Erpenius, *Grammatica Ebraea generalis* (Leiden, 1621), sigs. \*2v–3r: ‘...et sufficeret arbitrantur, si cum Ebraeum aliquid occurrit, dicere non cogantur, *Ebraea sunt, legi non possunt*.’

52 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 1.138.

53 Erpenius, *Oratio* III, pp. 125–6: ‘Proditum memoriae est, magnum illud Graeciae lumen Themistoclem, cum Persarum Regem semel tantum alloqui et ab eo quid petere in animo haberet, neque linguae Persicae gnarus esset, integrum annum ei addiscendae studiosissime impendisse: omnino persuasum, longe felicius et intellecturum sese esse quae rex diceret et ab alio intelligendum, si suis auribus et lingua uteretur, quam si alienis. Hoc si ita est, quid vobis faciendum sensetis qui huc detinamini ut non semel, sed ut quotidie et toto vitae vestrae cursu cum Rege Regum omnium, et Domino Dominantium de rebus gravissimis et pulcherrimis ac salutis vestrae, atque aliorum apicibus loquamini eiusque mandata deferatis?’



that God spoke to Adam in the Holy Tongue is not simply recycled here, but irrefutably reinforced—learning Hebrew becomes the only route to salvation.

It was Erpenius himself who collected all three orations and published them in his own press in 1621. The little volume was dedicated to his exemplary student of Arabic, Alexander van der Capellen, son of Gerlach, chancellor of the Court of Guelderland.<sup>54</sup> In the dedicatory epistle, Erpenius provided a sketchy overview of his career as Arabist and Hebraist, referring to the orations that accompanied his various appointments in the university. As regards his professorship of Hebrew, a language he had not previously taught, he claimed that his oration on Hebrew was a requirement since ‘it is forbidden to begin [teaching] without an introductory address.’<sup>55</sup> Thus it was, so claimed Erpenius, that he came to publish both orations, which were meant to instil his students and others with an ever increasing love for these most noble languages.<sup>56</sup>

Erpenius neglected to mention the first oration, and yet he did not excise it from the volume. The reader thus received somewhat contradictory messages about Arabic and its relation to its sister language. But towards the end of the third oration, Erpenius mentioned the luminaries who had studied Hebrew to good effect, one of whom was Isaac Casaubon, ‘who had strewn his writings with exceedingly learned and truly golden observations [taken from Hebrew literature].’<sup>57</sup> To learn Hebrew was therefore also to emulate the best scholars of the day.

But what kind of Hebraist was Erpenius? How much attention did this pioneer in Arabic actually devote to Hebrew? Touting for students, and penning a rather effective sermon on Hebrew, speaks of his oratorical skills, not of his knowledge of Hebrew culture. In 1621 he published a grammar for beginners and a bilingual edition of the books of Samuel—for pedagogical purposes.<sup>58</sup> Erpenius disapproved of the common practice of starting students on the Psalms, comparable to giving Homer to neophytes in Greek, notoriously

54 Erpenius, *Orationes tres*, Epistola dedicatoria, sig. A2r; Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, p. 184–5.

55 Ibid., sig. A3r–v: ‘Haud molto post Nobilissimis et Amplissimis Academiae Curatoribus visum fuit Linguae etiam Ebraeae quam antea ego non docueram Professionem mihi imponere. Eam sine praefatione auspicari nefas fuit.’

56 Ibid., sig. A4r: ‘... sperans fore, ut earum lectione, tum ipsi, tum alii, in quorum fortassis manus eae incident, in nobilissimarum Linguarum amore magis magisque confirmantur ...’

57 Ibid., p. 130: ‘Ishacus Casaubonus ... qui scriptis quoque suis doctissimas et vere aureas ex Ebraeismo peritas observationes insparsit.’

58 Erpenius, *Grammatica Ebraea generalis*, was reprinted in Geneva in 1627 with two new indices of chapters and words; *Samuelis libri duo Ebraice et Latine, ad usum Academicarum* (Leiden, 1621).

difficult for even the expert.<sup>59</sup> But aside from these publications he did not produce anything substantial in the field of Hebrew. Indeed his predecessor Guglielmus Coddæus had offered Hebrew students more than Erpenius, by way of *Hebraica*, not only producing revised editions of Hebrew grammars but also a volume of the medieval commentaries on Hosea written 'for those who desire to understand the writings of the rabbis'.<sup>60</sup>

Nevertheless, Erpenius was renowned for his knowledge of Hebrew. When he came to Philippe Duplessis-Mornay's academy of Saumur in 1609 his reputation had gone before him. The instructor of Hebrew (who had actually taught Franciscus Junius the Elder) was pushed into retirement as Erpenius became the favoured teacher.<sup>61</sup>

Erpenius also acceded to Philippe Duplessis-Mornay's request to translate his *Advertissement aux Juifs sur la venue du Messie* (1607), a plea to the Jews to relinquish their ancestral religion, into Latin. This conversionary tract was a patchwork of what were by now hackneyed passages from the Jewish sources, long disquisitions on the Messiah and related topics from the Talmudic tractate Sanhedrin, and choice quotations from Midrash Genesis Rabbah, in the style of Ramon Martí's thirteenth-century *Pugio Fidei*.<sup>62</sup> In a letter to dated 19 March 1611, Erpenius told Duplessis-Mornay that he needed to check his citations from the Hebrew sources, expressing the desire to get hold of the books in Venice or in Basel, where he hoped to avail himself of the library resources

59 See Erpenius, *Samuelis libri duo*, sig. A2r–v. In order to complete the biography of David 'the King and prophet', Erpenius adds 1 Kings ch. 1 and part of ch. 2 (1–11) to his bilingual edition of the text of Samuel.

60 Coddæus had also been Erpenius's Hebrew teacher; see Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, p. 61. He published several works of Hebraic content including a reprint of Petrus Martinus's *Grammatica Hebraea* with his notes (Leiden, 1612) and *Hoseas propheta Ebraice et Chaldaice cum duplici versione Latina et commentariis Ebraicis trium doctissimorum Judaeorum* ... (Leiden, 1621) written, as is stated on the title-page: 'In eorum omnia gratiam qui scripta Rabbitorum cupiunt intelligere.' His 'praefatio' speaks of the utility of reading Jewish commentators for the Christian reader and, drawing on the conventional idea of how easy it is to learn, states that someone who knows 'pure Hebrew' ('*purum Ebraeismum*') can easily understand the rabbis when provided with a bilingual text.

61 See Vossius, *Oratio in obitum*, pp. 12–13. On Philippe Bignon, Junius's Hebrew teacher at Saumur, see Paullus Merula, *Vita nobilis et eruditi viris Francisci Junii* (Leiden, 1595), p. 29: 'Post vero privatim Philippus Bignoneus, natione Aremoricus (qui nunc Rupellae [La Rochelle] vivit) cum aliis candidatis hebraeae linguae me coepit instituire.'

62 See J. Weinberg, 'Crossroads in Hebraism: Johann Buxtorf gives a Hebrew Lesson to Philippe Duplessis-Mornay', in *Jewish Books and their Readers: Aspects of Jewish and Christian Intellectual Life in Early Modern Europe*, ed. S. Mandelbrote and J. Weinberg (Leiden, 2016), pp. 151–68.

and help of the great Hebraist Johann Buxtorf the Elder.<sup>63</sup> He clearly took his task very seriously, but the translation never seems to have materialized. Erpenius, like Buxtorf, was somewhat suspicious of Duplessis-Mornay's knowledge of Jewish literature—the conference at Fontainebleau at which Catholics as well as Huguenots of the calibre of Isaac Casaubon accused him of numerous errors in the citation of patristic sources in his *Traité de l'Eglise* had definitely spoiled his credentials.<sup>64</sup>

It was also to Erpenius that Hugo Grotius turned in 1616 when he was beginning to correct copies of *De imperio* and needed some help on questions of Jewish history.<sup>65</sup> According to the testimony of Gerard J. Vossius Erpenius complied with his request by sending a package of questions to his teacher in Amsterdam, 'the most learned Jew living today'.<sup>66</sup> Jews usually remain anonymous in these kind of contexts. It has been suggested that Erpenius's 'most learned Jew' could have been Yzac Uziel, the Moroccan rabbi and teacher of Menasseh ben Israel or Joseph Pardo, the Salonican-born Rabbi who became the head (*hakham*) of the Amsterdam Sephardic community.<sup>67</sup> Erpenius himself, as far as we know, never referred to living Jews.

If in 1611 Erpenius had not yet accumulated a library of Hebrew books, we do know that by the following year he was already a seasoned Oriental book collector—this passion extended as much to Hebrew books as to those written in the other Oriental languages he knew and studied. Writing from Venice in May

63 *Mémoires et correspondance de Duplessis-Mornay*, 12 vols. (Paris, 1824–5), 11: 179–80. Buxtorf agreed to bring out the *Pugio fidei* for Duplessis-Mornay in about 1615 but never completed it. On the relations between Erpenius and Duplessis-Mornay see, e.g., his letter to Duplessis-Mornay on ecclesiastical procedures, dated 10 August 1619 (Leiden, University Library, MS BPL 885).

64 For a recent discussion of the conference of Fontainebleau see M. Wolfe, 'Exegesis as Public Performance: Controversialist Debate and Politics at the Conference of Fontainebleau (1600)', in *Politics and Religion in Early Bourbon France*, ed. A. Forrestal and E. Nelson (New York, 2009), pp. 65–85.

65 Hugo Grotius, *Epistolae quotquot reperiri potuerunt* (Amsterdam, 1687), p. 37: '...Erpenium vero ut in quibusdam Hebraicae historiae quaestiunculis me iuaret...'

66 'Herpenius super questionibus a te consultus indiculum earum Amstelodamum prae-misit ad praeceptorem suum, Iudaeorum quotquot hodie vivunt eruditissimum': Letter of Gerard Johannes Vossius to Grotius, 9 January 1617, reprinted in Hugo Grotius, *De imperio summarum potestatum circa sacra*, ed. H. van Dam, 2 vols. (Leiden, 2001), Appendix 11, pp. 946–7.

67 See Grotius, *De imperio*, 1: 113–14. On Pardo see M. Benayahu, 'Joseph Pardo—the First Rabbi of Amsterdam (Hebrew)', in *Studies on the History of Dutch Jewry*, ed. J. Michman (Jerusalem, 1984), pp. 1–6. One other candidate could be Isaac Aboab de Fonseca, the Hebrew teacher of Constantijn L'Empereur and who had come to Amsterdam in 1619, studying under Yzac Uziel and later becoming Rabbi and in 1623 Hakham of the Community.

1612, he informed Casaubon about his acquisition of many Hebrew books from ‘a certain Jew’—once again an unidentified person.<sup>68</sup> He did not give details of his purchases, but when in the next sentence he referred to his acquisition of Arabic books from a Venetian nobleman, he proceeded to describe the books in detail—apparently a sure sign of where his scholarly preference lay and a commitment to the study of Arabic which he shared with Casaubon. But he seems to have known his Hebrew bibliography, as a letter written to Johann Buxtorf the Elder, professor of Hebrew at the University of Basel, in 1613 makes quite clear. And the same letter also exposes something of Erpenius’s character that the story of his edition of the *Proverbia Arabica* brings to the fore—he appears as a somewhat untrustworthy character who rather liked exposing other scholars’ faults.<sup>69</sup> Not only does this document provide us with an illuminating picture of Erpenius’s adventures in Hebrew book collecting, it also indirectly offers a rather vivid image of how these scholars felt the need to ingratiate themselves with the doyen of European Hebrew studies.

Erpenius wrote to Buxtorf: ‘I am sending you my own copy of the Zohar, the Mantuan edition which is much more complete and fuller than the Cremona edition—there is no need to return it to me this year. I have no qualms in giving it to you for your use until the second, third, or fourth Frankfurt fair. There is a copy of the same edition here in the public library which if necessary I can consult.’<sup>70</sup> Here, Erpenius refers to two landmark printings of the Zohar, the classical work of Jewish mysticism: the Mantuan octavo edition in three volumes printed between 1558 and 1560, and the Cremona folio volume published between 1559 and 1560.<sup>71</sup> We see him buying Hebrew books at the Frankfurt fair, but also browsing the Hebrew collections in his own university library. Oddly, however, this was not the only time that Buxtorf was offered a Zohar. In the library of the University of Basel, which houses many of the books belong-

68 London, British Library, MS Burney 364, fol. 24r.

69 See A. Vrolijk, ‘The Prince of Arabists and his Many Errors: Thomas Erpenius’s Image of Joseph Scaliger and the Edition of the *Proverbia Arabica* (1614)’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 73 (2010), 297–325.

70 Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, MS G 11 24, fols. 19–20: ‘... Mitto et utendum tibi זוהר [Zohar] meum, editio Mantuanae [sic] quae Cremonensi longe perfectior et locupletior: quod non necesse habes hoc anno remittere. Libere et secure do utere in secundas tertias etiam aut quartas nundinas Frankfurtenses: est enim hic in Bibliotheca publica aliud eiusdem editionis exemplar quod cum opus erit inspicere potero ...’

71 The printing history of the Zohar is complicated. The Mantuan text was printed between 1558 and 1560 and was produced on the basis of ten manuscripts; the rival Cremona folio edition was completed earlier than the Mantuan Zohar, but printed between 1559 and 1560 on the basis of different manuscripts. There are therefore differences between the editions, but it is impossible to claim that one is more defective than the other.

ing to the Buxtorf family, there is a copy of the Cremona edition of the Zohar published in 1559–60. It was a gift from Franciscus Gomarus, the controversial theologian and a former colleague, from Leiden. On the attached slip dated spring 1614, we read with astonishment that Erpenius had told Gomarus, who happened to be in Leiden, how much Buxtorf desired to own a Zohar. He, Gomarus, was therefore sending Buxtorf a present, a copy of the Cremona Zohar which he had bought at the Frankfurt fair.<sup>72</sup>

It would seem that Erpenius, like Gomarus, saw himself as a devoted servant of the great Hebraist Buxtorf, whose scholarly interests he intended to serve. Two years later, in a letter dated 25 March 1615, Buxtorf informed Erpenius that he was about to return the borrowed Zohar, which he would first compare with his own text [i.e. the Cremona edition].<sup>73</sup> Yet Buxtorf's great desire to lay his hands on this classic work of Jewish mysticism is something of a mystery. After all, Buxtorf was no mystic, and the Zohar's Kabbalistic secrets certainly did not appeal to him. Moreover, this was not the first time Buxtorf had seen a copy of the Zohar. In a prominent position right at the beginning of his 1609 *Thesaurus grammaticus* he had listed a number of passages with page numbers from the Cremona Zohar. In the accompanying note Buxtorf stated that he had got hold of a copy of the Zohar from Jews for a few weeks and that the text was replete with references to the Hebrew vowel-points and accents. In an uncharacteristic show of deference, he stated that, according to the general consensus of the Jews, the Zohar had been composed in pre-Talmudic times and before the age of the Masoretes.<sup>74</sup> It becomes clear, then, that Buxtorf's great need for the Zohar was principally connected to the debate of the day in which Erpenius himself was to play a role. For four years after his appointment as professor of Hebrew, Erpenius took a stand on a matter that was to divide the scholarly establishment for centuries, and his stance was destined not to please Buxtorf. Erpenius chose to publish Louis Cappel's extensive rejoinder to Buxtorf's *Tiberias* on the antiquity of the Hebrew vowel-points. The book entitled *The Secret of the Points Revealed* was printed anonymously—Erpenius introduced

72 Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, MS FA 111 13. The dedication is at the bottom of the title-page: 'Doctissimo D. Johanni Buxtorfio Hebraearum literarum ornamento Franciscus Gomarus theol. D. & professor in schola Middelburgensi dono misit Francofurto. anno CI) I) CXIV Nundinis Paschalibus.'

73 Munich Bavarian State Library Clm 10359, 9, 215: 'Zohar tuum recuperabis sequentibus nundinis; interea plenius cum meo conferam.'

74 Johann Buxtorf, *Thesaurus grammaticus linguae sanctae Hebraeae* (Basel, 1609), sig. ) ( 8v: '...Cum hac hyeme a Judaeis commodato acciperem ad aliquot septimanas librum Zohar (qui omnium Hebraeorum consensu ante Masorethas et editum Talmud conscriptum est) inveni loca in quibus non tantum punctorum et accentuum mentio fit sed et nomina quorundam ...'

the work with fulsome praise of the unnamed author.<sup>75</sup> But he did not neglect to use the opportunity to admit that sixteen years earlier, in 1608, he had made similar arguments on the Hebrew vowel-points in a public debate at the University of Leiden.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, he claimed to have decided to oppose the view of 'maximus et clarissimus Buxtorfius' by investigating the topic and had intended to include his study in his future work, the *Bibliotheca Orientalis*.<sup>77</sup> When he received Cappel's work, which he read avidly, he was overwhelmed by the clarity and persuasiveness of the argument and agreed to bring it to press forthwith for 'lovers of letters and Hebrew antiquities'.<sup>78</sup>

In brief, Cappel was partly defending the thesis of the German Jew Elijah Levita, articulated in the introductions to his widely circulated *Massoret Hamassoret* (1538).<sup>79</sup> By a series of grammatical and historical arguments, Levita had rejected the idea that any of the written Masoretic signs could be defined as Mosaic *halakhah* from Sinai, the rabbinic term used to denote non-scriptural laws that have the force of Sinaitic law. Levita proposed a traditional view: the Masorah, as the word signifies, was transmitted orally through the generations; the seventh- or eighth-century Masoretes of Tiberias and later grammarians simply invented the graphemes and accents, and inserted them into the text, and the work of Masorah continued. Levita's views were challenged by the Italian Jewish scholar Azariah de' Rossi.<sup>80</sup> One of his arguments revolved around the vowel-points and their designations that are not recorded in the early rabbinic documents. In an effort to challenge Levita, de' Rossi produced a whole range of passages from the mystical tradition and the Zohar in particular, the attribution of which to the second-century sage Simeon bar Yohai he did not appear to question in this context. Furthermore, in 1620 when Buxtorf finally came to write the *Tiberias*, his defence of the Masorah, he did refer to the Zohar and cited the passages collated by de' Rossi. The Zohar was a key text in the debate. It must be assumed that in 1613, the date of the letter, Erpenius knew Buxtorf's position on the matter of the vowel-points; regardless of his

75 [Louis Cappel], *Arcanum punctuationis revelatum sive de punctorum vocalium et accentuum apud hebraeos vera et germana antiquitate diatriba*, ed. Thomas Erpenius (Leiden, 1624).

76 Cappel, *Arcanum*, sig. (a2)v: '... unde et annis abhinc ferme sedecim non dubitavi eam publice in magno Doctorum virorum et studiosorum conventu, suscipere defendam.' See Juynboll, *Beoefenaars*, pp. 61–2, and A. Hamilton, *William Bedwell the Arabist 1563–1632* (Leiden, 1985), p. 31.

77 Cappel, *Arcanum*, sig. (a2)v. There does not seem to be any trace of this wide-ranging work 'de origine, natura, differentiis, et varia fortuna, librisque iisdem conscriptis'.

78 *Ibid.*, sig. A3v: 'Literarum & Antiquitatum Ebraicarum amatores'

79 For a recent discussion of Cappel's *Arcanum* see N. Hardy, *Criticism and Confession: The Bible in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 2017), ch. 9.

80 Azariah de' Rossi, *Me'or Einayim* (Mantua, 1573–5), ch. 59.

own position on the subject, it would appear that he was intent on serving Buxtorf's scholarly and ultimately religious needs.

The Zohar was just one of the topics that Erpenius mentioned in his letter to Buxtorf. There are the usual complaints about salaries in the University of Leiden, but also much of the epistle revolves around Hebrew books. He lists his recent acquisitions, which, at first sight, seem to be a job lot; but, on closer inspection, we can see that Erpenius's buying spree at the Frankfurt market was not entirely arbitrary. He had bought two Venetian products, a Bible with Targum and Rashi, and the Babylonian Talmud—monumental editions that any self-respecting Hebraist would make every effort to acquire. Of great utility for the future professor of Hebrew were the grammatical tracts by Ibn Ezra, Leon Modena's dictionary, *Galut Yehudah*, Samuel Archivolti's *Arugat ha-Bosem* and Solomon of Urbino's *Ohel Moed* on synonyms.<sup>81</sup> It is not clear why Erpenius would have bought Leon Modena's *Lev Aryeh* on the art of memory (Venice, 1612) or Isaac Alfual's Kabbalistic *Nofet Tsufim* (Constantinople, 1582). It could be argued, however, that his acquisition of Berekhiah Hanaqdan's *Mishlei Shualim* ('Fables of Foxes'), printed in Venice in 1557, was a deliberate choice. This thirteenth-century compilation of animal fables contained many stories in common with Luqmān, the so-called Arab Aesop, that Erpenius himself, as we have seen, was to edit in 1615.

But showing off his new acquisitions to Buxtorf was not the sole reason for Erpenius's communication. Buxtorf had sent him a present of his *De abbreviaturis* of 1613, which also contained his *Bibliotheca rabbinica*, a pioneering work of Jewish bibliography.<sup>82</sup> Erpenius insinuated a note of criticism as he thanked Buxtorf for the gift: 'Your book *De abbreviaturis* gives me enormous pleasure, as does the *Bibliotheca rabbinica*, although there are quite a few titles missing, which you would not deny; but then it is never possible to begin something and immediately bring it to completion.'<sup>83</sup> Erpenius apparently felt so

81 Talmud Bavli, Venice; Torah with Targum and Rashi, Venice 8°; *Ohel Moed*, Venice 4°; *Mishlei shualim*, Venice 8°; *Arugat ha-Bosem*, Venice 4°; *Zahot* of Rabbi ibn Ezra; *Moznayim* of Rabbi ibn Ezra, 4°; *Golat* [*Galut*] *Yehudah*, Venice 4°; *Lev Aryeh*, Venice 4°; *Nofet Tsufim*, Constantinople 4° [We have transcribed the Hebrew titles]. For additional reference to Erpenius' Hebrew printed books including his copy of the Babylonian Talmud which were acquired by Constantijn L'Empereur see van Rooden, *Theology*, p. 85, n. 115 and p.92.

82 Johann Buxtorf, *De abbreviaturis liber novus & copiosus: cui accesserunt operis talmudici brevis recensio, cum ejusdem librorum & capitum Indice; Item Bibliotheca Rabbinica nova, ordine alphabetico disposita* (Basel, 1613).

83 Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, MS G 11 24, fol. 20r: 'Liber tuus de abbreviaturis mirum in modum mihi arridet, ut et Bibliotheca Rabbinica in qua tamen non pauca desiderantur quod nec ipse ignoras: nimirum inchoari simul et perfici nihil unquam solet ...'

convinced of his own knowledge of Hebrew literature that he could patronize the master Hebraist.<sup>84</sup>

We cannot know whether Erpenius read all the books and manuscripts that he owned. The catalogue of his entire library that was printed after his death in 1626 contains a wide selection of Hebrew printed books, including several works that were not included in Buxtorf's *Bibliotheca rabbinica*.<sup>85</sup> After his death, the manuscripts were supposed to have been bought by the University of Leiden, but by a series of unexpected events they came to Cambridge in 1632—an impressive collection (including manuscripts in other Oriental languages), which, like his printed books, appears to have been chosen with care.<sup>86</sup> The fourteen manuscripts include Hebrew Bibles, a Judaeo-Arabic translation of Ptolemy's *Almagest*, Avicenna's *Canon*, medieval commentaries on the Aristotelian corpus, a Hebrew translation (*Kavvanot ha-filosofim*) of al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa* and Moses ben Joshua of Narbonne's commentary on Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Ṭufayl's philosophical romance.<sup>87</sup> Erpenius appears to have been collecting manuscripts written in Hebrew that mirrored the Arabic culture which was so deeply appreciated by the early modern Christian Orientalists.

Once again, we cannot know for certain whether Erpenius actually perused these manuscripts—they may or may not represent a deep engagement with medieval philosophical and scientific literature written in Hebrew. The most beautiful manuscript in Erpenius's Hebrew collection (which he appears to have dated according to the colophon) is a fourteenth-century Ashkenazic parchment codex of the Hagiographa: it contains the Targum and some of the medieval commentators, with the Masoretic apparatus displayed throughout in all its glory.<sup>88</sup> Private libraries convey mixed messages.

84 In the letter to Erpenius dated 25 March, 1615 (see n.73 above), Buxtorf claims that he had not yet completed the catalogue: 'Catalogum librorum meorum Rabbinicorum nondum totum descripsi...'

85 *Catalogus librorum in diversis linguis Orientalibus partim manuscriptorum partim typis editorum bibliothecae celeberrimi et doctissimi viri piae memoriae* (Leiden, 1625), sigs. Eir–F4v. The catalogue was added to Vossius's obituary of Erpenius and Petrus Scriverius's *Manes Erpeniani*. Interestingly, two of the books listed in the catalogue, but not found in Buxtorf's *Bibliotheca*, relate to the Zohar: *Mareh Kohen*, an index to the Zohar (Cracow, 1589), and *Torat Emet*, a compendium to the Zohar (Salonica, 1604).

86 On the fate of Erpenius's library see J.C.T. Oates, *The Manuscripts of Thomas Erpenius* (Melbourne, 1974).

87 In his appendix to his *Oratio in obitum Thomae Erpenii*, Vossius described 8 of the manuscripts, all of which correspond to those now held in Cambridge University Library.

88 Cambridge, University Library, MS Ee.5.9.



At the end of his dedicatory epistle to Alexander van der Capellen, Erpenius interjected a personal note into the record of the publication date: '17 December, 1620 years from the birth of the Messiah, which is also twelve years from the time that I began my Arabic studies.'<sup>89</sup> Not unjustifiably, in an epistle aimed to win the favours of an influential erstwhile student of Arabic, Erpenius emphasized his role as Arabist. We simply do not know whether Erpenius also nurtured genuine intentions of promoting the study of Hebrew and Hebrew literature. His premature death does not allow us to come to rash conclusions about the significance of his extensive Hebrew book and manuscript collections, nor about the key role he played in the Hebrew vowel-point debate. It may be that we should instead take seriously the indications that he saw himself as an Orientalist in the broadest sense of the word. In 1624, more than thirty years before Johann Heinrich Hottinger produced his pioneering *Promtuarium sive Bibliotheca Orientalis*,<sup>90</sup> Erpenius himself had planned to embark on a project to produce a comprehensive *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, but was never able to complete, or perhaps even commence, this ambitious and fashionable venture.<sup>91</sup>

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89 Erpenius, *Orationes tres*, Epistola dedicatoria, sig. A 6v, 'anno a nativitate Messiae M.D.C.XX. die xvii. Decembris, qui idem, annis abhinc duodecim, studiorum meorum Arabicorum natalis extitit'

90 See Loop, *Hottinger*, pp. 134-7.

91 See n. 77 above.

## From *Astronomica* to *Exotica*: Jacob Golius's Edition of al-Farghānī's *On the Science of the Stars* in Comparison with the Earlier Versions

Charles Burnett

At his death in 1667, Jacob Golius, second Professor of Arabic at the University of Leiden, left unfinished the notes to his edition and translation of al-Farghānī's *Book on the Summaries of the Science of the Stars and the Principles of the Celestial Movements* (*Kitāb jawāmi' 'ilm al-nujūm wa-uṣūl al-ḥarakāt al-samāwīya*)—notes which were intended to elucidate the 'exotic or Oriental things which are to be found in this text'.<sup>1</sup> One could ask why he had been translating al-Farghānī's popular work into Latin, when two Latin translations from Arabic already existed, one of which had been printed twice in the sixteenth century; moreover, a Hebrew version of the Arabic text had been translated into Latin and printed in 1590 and reprinted as recently as 1618. All these versions had notes attached to them. The purpose of this article is to show how different Golius's publication was from the ones already available,<sup>2</sup> and to suggest that the differences were due to a different attitude towards Arabic

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- 1 The full title (after the title in Arabic) runs: *Muhammedis Fil. Ketiri Ferganensis, qui vulgo Alfraganus dicitur, Elementa Astronomica, Arabicè et Latinè. Cum Notis ad res exoticas sive Orientales, quæ in iis occurrunt*. Opera Jacobi Golii. Amstelodami apud Johannem Jansonium à Waasberge, et Viduam Elizei Weyerstraet, 1669; reprinted by F. Sezgin (Frankfurt am Main, 1986), (see Fig. 5.1) (henceforth 'Golius, *Alfraganus*', or 'Golius, *Notae*', when the reference is to the separately paginated notes). For the different titles of the work, see Appendix III below. For consistency, I shall use the title *On the Science of the Stars*. Golius's work has received little attention in modern scholarship. R. Campani, 'Il "Kitāb al-Farghānī" nel testo Arabo e nelle versioni', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, 3 (1910), 205–52, uses Golius's Arabic edition, but says little about the Latin translation and nothing about the *Notae*. A fuller account is given in D.N. Hasse, *Success and Suppression: Arabic Sciences and Philosophy in the Renaissance* (Cambridge MA, 2016), pp. 331–3.
  - 2 I might not be the first to do this comparative work since Edward Bernard (1638–97) listed such a work among other scholarly desiderata in his programme of publication from c. 1673: 'Alfragani Astronomia Arab. Lat. Ex editione ac illustratione D. Golii, collatis etiam MS Latt. Digb. et Savil. et Laud. E. 107': see G.J. Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1996), p. 233.

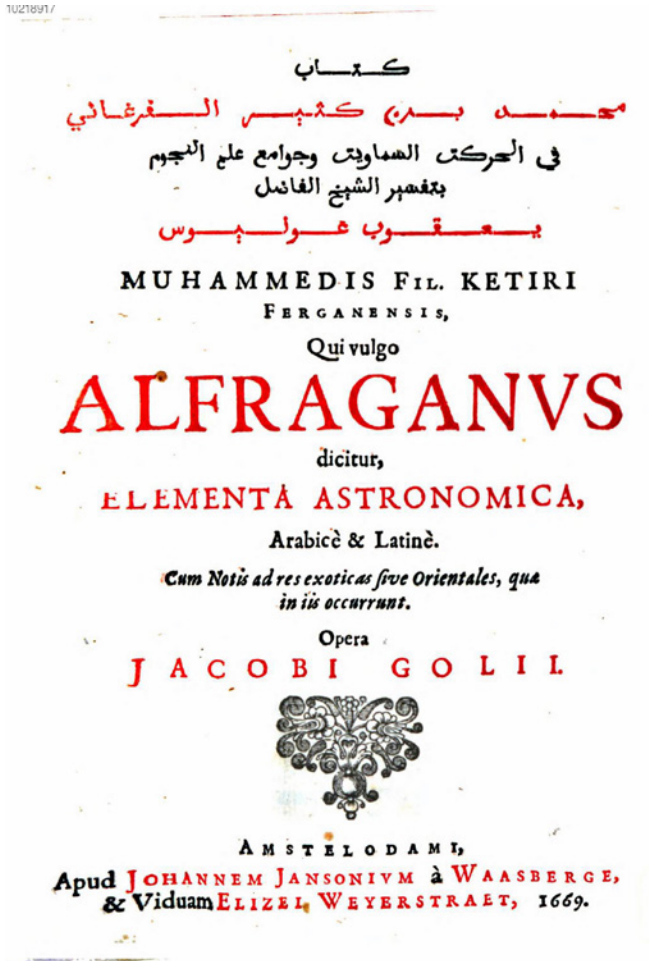


FIGURE 5.1 The Title Page of Jacob Golius's edition of al-Farghānī's *On the Science of the Stars*

scientific texts, which, by the middle of the seventeenth century, were seen as a treasure house of the 'exotic'.

...

The three Latin translations of al-Farghānī's *On the Science of the Stars* that preceded Golius's text are as follows:

1. On 11 March 1135 John of Seville and Limia, completed in Limia (Portugal) a translation entitled *Liber Alfragani in sciencia astrorum et radicibus*

- motuum celestium*. It is extant in at least 71 manuscripts and three Renaissance printed editions.<sup>3</sup> (= J)
2. A second translation was made at an uncertain date by Gerard of Cremona (1114–87).<sup>4</sup> It was entitled *Liber de aggregationibus scientie stellarum et principis celestium motuum*. It survives in at least 48 manuscripts and was printed in 1910.<sup>5</sup> (= G)
  3. In 1590 Jacob Christmann (1554–1613), Professor of Hebrew (from 1584) and of Arabic (from 1608) at Heidelberg University,<sup>6</sup> published his Latin translation of Jacob Anatoli's early thirteenth-century Hebrew translation of Farghānī's book under the title *Muhamedis Alfragani Arabis Chronologica et astronomica elementa*, with the heirs of Andreas Wechel, in Frankfurt; this edition was reprinted in Frankfurt by Andreas Cambierius in 1618.

The first two versions are exceedingly literal translations from the Arabic.<sup>7</sup> John of Seville's version is slightly less literal than that of Gerard of Cremona, who is notorious for his *verbum de verbo* method.<sup>8</sup> Both translators, however, were following the norm for translations of scientific works that was common to most of the translators of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, whether working from Greek or Arabic. The literal translation was supposed to replace

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- 3 Ferrara, Andreas Gallus Belfortis, 1493; Nuremberg, Johannes Petreius, 1537; Paris, Christian Wechel, 1546. F.J. Carmody in his *Alfragani differentie* (Berkeley CA, 1943), uses pr. 1493 and Oxford, Bodleian, MS Auct. F.3.13 to establish the text of John's translation and compares the readings of Gerard and Golius in his apparatus criticus. The numbers of manuscripts are based on D. Juste and C. Burnett, *Translations of Works on Astronomy and Astrology (c. 1100–c. 1450)* (unpublished catalogue).
  - 4 Paris, Bibliothèque national de France, MS lat. 7400 is the only manuscript known to me to name the translator: 'a magistro Girardo Cre. translatus de Arabico in Latinum'. In the *Commemoratio librorum* drawn up by Gerard's students (*socii*) after his death we find a 'Liber Alfragani continens capitula .xxx.' listed as the first of Gerard's astronomical translations: see C. Burnett, 'The Coherence of the Arabic-Latin Translation Program in Toledo in the Twelfth Century', *Science in Context*, 14 (2001), 249–88; reprinted with corrections in id., *Arabic into Latin in the Middle Ages: The Translators and their Intellectual and Social Context* (Farnham, 2009), Article VII (see pp. 275–7).
  - 5 R. Campani, *Alfragano (Al-Farghānī): Il 'Libro dell'aggregazione delle stelle'* (Città di Castello, 1910) (Campani chose the title 'Astronomia et astrologica rudimenta').
  - 6 Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning*, pp. 37–8; J.J. Verdonk, 'Jacob Christmann', in *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, 16 vols. (New York, 1971), 3: 262.
  - 7 The extent of this literalness can be seen from the texts printed in Appendix 1.
  - 8 Gerard's literal style is notorious. Already in A.G. Kästner's *Geschichte der Mathematik*, 4 vols. (Göttingen, 1758–60), 2: 260, we read 'Sein Latein ist ziemlich Arabisch', and Romeo Campani, who was planning a critical edition of the Arabic text, regarded the best 'manuscript of the Arabic text' to be Gerard's translation: see his 'Il "Kitāb al-Farghānī"', p. 247: 'quella di Gherardo, che (mi si permetta l'espressione) è il migliore manoscritto arabo'.

the original completely, because it had everything (including the word order and all the words) that was in the original. This is the gist of the well-known defence of the *verbum de verbo* translation (that of the *fidus interpres*—originally the interpreter for the prosecutor or the defence in the Roman law court) in Boethius's preface to his second commentary on the *Isagoge* of Porphyry, where he says that, 'in those writings in which a knowledge of things is required, ... the incorrupt truth (*incorrupta veritas*) should be expressed', and to do this one must render each (Greek) word with a (Latin) one which has been pressed out (*expressum*) of it and closely compared (*comparatum*) with it', so that, 'through the honesty of a very complete translation, nothing more in the writings of the Greeks would be wanting'.<sup>9</sup> There is no attempt by John of Seville or Gerard of Cremona to make the Latin elegant or idiomatic.

Both these versions were known to Jacob Christmann, who laments that the available printed version (that is, the one by John of Seville) had been 'translated in a negligent way and very badly mutilated'.<sup>10</sup> He goes on to say that 'John of Seville translated the work into Latin in around the year of Christ 1142; this version is widely known, but is corrupt and wanting in many places.'<sup>11</sup> Christmann is more complimentary about the other medieval translation that he knows (in fact, that of Gerard), saying that: 'A much better and more perfect <version>, although of uncertain authorship, is extant in the Palatine Library.'<sup>12</sup>

9 Boethius, *In Isagogen Porphyrii commentorum editio secunda*, ed. G. Schepss and S. Brandt (Vienna and Leipzig, 1906), p. 135: 'in qua quidem vereor ne subierim fidi interpretis culpam, cum verbum verbo expressum comparatumque reddiderim. Cuius incepti ratio est quod in his scriptis in quibus rerum cognitio quaeritur, incorrupta veritas exprimenda est. ... per integerrimae translationis sinceritatem nihil in Graecorum litteris amplius desideretur.'

10 Christmann, *Muhamedis Alfragani elementa*, sig. )( ii<sup>r</sup>: '... equidem indolui quod is negligenter versus et pessimè mutilatus in publicum prodiisset.'

11 Ibid., p. 5 (sig. A iii<sup>r</sup>): 'quam (*al-Farghānī's work*) Ioannes Hispalensis circa annum Christi 1142 in Latinam linguam convertit: quæ versio vulgata quidem est, sed multis in locis corrupta et mutila'. Christmann might be confusing the date with that of John of Seville's *Epitome totius astrologiae*, a work on all the parts of astrology, the printed version of which (Nuremberg, 1548), gives 1142 as its date of composition.

12 Ibid., 'Longè melior et perfectior, incerti tamen auctoris, extat in Bibliotheca Palatina.' The Palatine Library belonged to Heidelberg, Christmann's residence, until it was stolen from there during the Thirty Years' War, and became, in 1623, the Palatine Collection of the Vatican Library. Since Christmann (pp. 5–6) describes the manuscript as being 'copied by Friedrich, a monk of Regensberg, OSB, in the monastery of St Emmeram, and completed in the year of the Lord 1447 on the feastday of Goar the Confessor (6 July)' ('Ea descripta est à Friderico monacho Ratisponensi, ordinis S. Benedicti, in monasterio S. Emeranni, et absoluta anno Domini 1447 in die Goaris confessoris'), it is likely to be Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Pal. lat. 1376, s. xv, fols. 238<sup>r</sup>–253<sup>v</sup>, the only Palatine manuscript to contain Gerard's translation.

He mentions this version as the one that Jacob Anatoli relied on for the most part.<sup>13</sup> Since Christmann's translation is two removes from the original Arabic, it is not surprising that it differs somewhat from those of John and Gerard. It is, moreover, much more elegant, introducing poetic flourishes.<sup>14</sup>

We do not know what criticisms Jacob Golius might have made of his medieval predecessors since he died before writing his preface. But his publishers spoke for him, when they mentioned that al-Farghānī had been 'a stranger for so many centuries in foreign lands',<sup>15</sup> until Golius came along and was not only the editor of the text in al-Farghānī's native (*vernaculus*) language, but also his faithful interpreter (*fidus interpres*).<sup>16</sup> It turns out, however, that he was not the *fidus interpres* in Boethius's sense. Rather, he translates *ad sensum* and not *ad verbum* and produces Latin prose which sounds good and is enjoyable to read.

Another way in which Golius makes the text more Latinate is by adding Latin endings to Arabic proper names.<sup>17</sup> Thus, in Chapter 9, on the cities and regions in the climes, we find with first declension endings *Sindia*, *Saīda*, *Hadramūta*, *Fergāna*, *Jémena* and *Negda*; and in the second declension neuter case, *Baghdadum*; as adjectives there appear *Habassinus* and *Basrensis*,<sup>18</sup> which is in line with his transcription of al-Farghānī as *Ferganensis* on the title-page.<sup>19</sup> One

13 Ibid.: '...quæ translationi Hebrææ magna ex parte respondet'. A comparison of Christmann's text with both versions confirms the impression that Anatoli used Gerard's version: see Campani, 'Il "Kitāb al-Farghānī"', p. 222; id., *Alfragano (Al-Farghānī)*, pp. 36–51; and Shlomo Sela, 'Al-Farghānī on the 48 Ptolemaic Constellations: A Newly Discovered Text in Hebrew Translation', *Aleph*, 16.2 (2016), 249–365 (271–2).

14 See Appendix I below, for a specimen of his translation.

15 Golius, *Alfraganus*, sig. \*2<sup>r</sup>: 'post tot secula peregrinis in oris hospes': see Appendix II below.

16 Among his reasons for making this edition may have been to establish the true contents of al-Farghānī's text, in light of the differences between the 30 chapters and the 32 chapters of the previous versions. Gronovius, in his funeral oration for Golius, sees the *Elementa astronomica* as a successor to Christmann's edition: Johannes Fredericus Gronovius, *Laudatio funebris recitata et exsequiis clarissimi viri Jacobi Golii Arabice linguæ et mathematicorum professoris ante diem IV. nonas Octobr. 1667* (Leiden, 1668), pp. 19–20: 'Sic Mohammedis Alfergani elementa Astronomica, post Christmanni operam nova versione et doctis commentariis illustravit.'

17 For an earlier (12th–13th century) dispute (Stephen of Antioch, opposed by Simon of Genoa) as to whether Arabic terms and names should be declined as Latin words, see C. Burnett, 'Simon of Genoa's Use of the *Breviarium* of Stephen, the Disciple of Philosophy', in *Simon of Genoa's Medical Lexicon*, ed. B. Zipser (London, 2013), pp. 67–79 (70–71 and 73).

18 John, Gerard and Christmann simply transliterate the Arabic names.

19 The title-page includes the 'vulgar form' 'Alfraganus', whereas the name is spelt 'Alferganus' in the running heads.

might argue that it is easier to remember the names if they are Latinized to the extent of being declined. Bare transliterations are less easy to remember and more liable to corruption when copied.

It could be suggested that the literal translation was adopted by John and Gerard precisely because the original text was not available to their readers, whereas a translation that accompanied the original could afford to be more literary. Unless one wanted the translation to be a crib to facilitate the reading of the original, word by word,<sup>20</sup> it made sense to produce a Latin translation that was clear in its expression and pleasant to read.



What distinguishes Golius's treatment of al-Farghānī from the earlier translators above all are the notes. This is what the publishers in 1669 drew particular attention to, both on the title-page and in their preface. Notes themselves were not unprecedented, since the Arabic version had already attracted commentaries soon after its composition. Al-Qabīṣī (mid-tenth century) wrote a brief *Sharḥ al-fuṣūl* (*Explanation of the Chapters*) which is, rather, a selection of passages from the *fuṣūl* on which he makes astronomical comments. Al-Qabīṣī chose no passage from Chapter 9 (Golius' focus), but simply wrote: 'He went over the description of <longitude and latitude> in the chapter which is before this. Then he made an account of the names of the cities in each clime. As for what was beyond the climes there are few inhabitants because it is the terminus of the quarter which has 90 degrees.'<sup>21</sup> Al-Bīrūnī (973–1048) wrote a commentary, or a 'new edition', that extended to 200 folios.<sup>22</sup>

Manuscripts of both medieval Latin translations include glosses. Gerard of Cremona's translation received a substantial early gloss that concentrated on the mathematical aspects of the work. This can be found in Oxford, Bodleian, MS Laud misc. 644 (14th century), where it includes a table giving astronomical values for Toledo and Cremona, both places associated with Gerard.<sup>23</sup> Ja-

20 This was the strategy of other teachers of Arabic in the 17th century: e.g., Thomas Erpenius in his *Historia Iosephi Patriarchae ex Alcorano, Arabicè, cum triplici versione Latina et scholiis* (Leiden, 1617), gives the *Sūrat Iūsuf* 'ad verbum in Latinum versa' (sig. D1<sup>r</sup>), with the Latin equivalents over each Arabic word and (almost) repeated in the correct order in the margin.

21 I am grateful to Keiji Yamamoto for sending me his transcription of this text, from Istanbul, Ayasofya, MS 4832, fols. 94<sup>b</sup>–114<sup>b</sup>.

22 Al-Bīrūnī's *Tahdhīb fuṣūl al-Farghānī* ('The Refining of the Chapters of al-Farghānī'). See F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, 12 vols. (Leiden, 1967–2000), 6: 150.

23 Oxford, Bodleian, MS Laud misc. 644, fol. 196<sup>v</sup>, a table with 'elevationes in Tolletto', 'elevationes in Cremona' and 'elevationes in spera recta' along one axis.

cob Christmann, in turn, provided a commentary, but one with a very specific purpose. On the title-page of his translation he states that 'a Commentary has been added, which explains the rationale of the Roman, Egyptian, Arabic, Persian, Syrian and Hebrew calendar'.<sup>24</sup> This implies that the commentary is only on the first chapter of al-Farghānī's work, which is entitled 'On the Years of the Arabs and Non-Arabs and the Names of Their Months and Days, and the Differences between Them'. Christmann, in fact, comments on several chapters, but very selectively. The comments are given as endnotes to chapters, keyed to the text with superscript Arabic numerals, very like the usual way of footnoting in modern scholarship, except that the superscript numerals come before the word or phrase concerned. Most frequently the notes compare the 'interpretatio Hebraeus' with the 'vulgatae editiones' (= John of Seville's version) and the 'Latina bibliothecae Palatinae versio' (= Gerard of Cremona's version). But he also refers occasionally to earlier writers: the Greeks Ptolemy (his *Almagest* and *Geography*) and Aristotle (*Meteorology*); the Arabs Māshā'allāh (his *Astronomia*), Thābit ibn Qurra (*On Trepidation*), Abū 'l-Fidā' (his *Geography*), al-Battānī, Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Abī al-Rijāl, and an *Epitome Arabica/Arabice Almagesti*;<sup>25</sup> and, among the medievals, the Alphonsine Tables, John of Seville (his *Epitome totius astrologiae*) and the 'Auctor Summae Anglicae' (that is, John Ashenden), which is in a manuscript in the Bibliotheca Palatina of Heidelberg bound with a manuscript of a certain 'Auctor theoriarum',<sup>26</sup> and the Jew David Kimhi. Christmann has been in personal contact with the mathematician and astrologer Joachim Heller and the polymath Joseph Scaliger; and he refers the reader to fuller information in his own *Instructions in the Arabic and Turkish Language*.<sup>27</sup> His Arabic sources are avowedly those of the Palatine library in Heidelberg, which had been augmented by manuscripts belonging to Guillaume Postel. But, in spite of having access to at least three different versions of al-Farghānī, and help from other sources, Christmann is frustrated by the lack of an Arabic original:

24 Christmann, *Muhamedis Alfragani elementa*, title-page: 'Additus est Commentarius, qui rationem calendarii Romani, Ægyptiaci, Arabici, Persici, Syriaci, et Hebraei explicat'.

25 Ibid., pp. 78 and 115.

26 Ibid., p. 42: 'Auctor theoriarum, qui manuscriptus est cum Summa Anglica compactus, extat in bibliotheca Palatina.'

27 Ibid., p. 40: 'Institutiones Arabicæ et Turcicæ linguæ quas breve editurum esse confido'. Although he is confident that the work will appear, there is no evidence that it was ever finished or published. A study of Christmann's range of sources, and his academic acquaintances, is a desideratum.



Therefore, I have followed this version <that is, Gerard's> in all things <concerning the names of places in Chapter 9>, although I have no doubt that many of the names are also corrupt in it; and these cannot be corrected unless one had an authoritative manuscript of al-Farghānī written in the Arabic language.<sup>28</sup>

And at the end of the text he wrote:

Thus far I have explained Alfraganus from the Hebrew translation, I have compared it with a Latin manuscript, and I have used other authors who could shed some light. But I am not satisfied, since I was forced to skip over many obscure and ambiguous passages in the context of al-Farghānī, because an Arabic copy was lacking.<sup>29</sup>

Jacob Golius had the advantage of a much larger number of Arabic manuscripts, largely collected by himself, and among these was one containing the Arabic al-Farghānī. He refers to Christmann only once, when discussing whether al-Farghānī's personal name (*ism*) was Aḥmad or Muḥammad, and it is only within this reference that Gerard's version is mentioned (anonymously).<sup>30</sup>

Otherwise Golius's notes appear to be completely independent of Christmann's. And they are vast. While the Arabic text and the Latin translation are each of 109 pages, the *Notae* extend to 306 pages and cover only the first eight

28 Ibid., p. 48: 'Quapropterea hanc in omnibus sum secutus, etsi mihi dubium non sit multa quoque nomina in ea depravata esse, quæ tamen corrigi non possunt, nisi etiam habeatur authenticus linguaque Arabica conscriptus Alfragani codex.'

29 Ibid., pp. 152–3: 'Hactenus Alfraganus ex Hebraea interpretatione exposui, cum manuscripto Latino codice contuli, aliosque autores adhibui, qui lucem aliquam afferre possent; mihi ipsi tamen non satisfeci, cum multa in contextu Alfragani obscura et ambigua transilire sim coactus, quod deesset exemplar Arabicum.' He continues: 'Id si ex Italicis vel Hispanicis Bibliothecis eruerint, suoque prælo divulgant, qui iam Romæ libris Arabicis imprimendis occupantur, maximo beneficio Rempub. Literariam præbuerint, quo deinceps tersiorem et absolutiorem simus habituri Alfraganum' ('If those who already are engaged in printing Arabic books in Rome manage to dig this out from Italian or Spanish libraries, and publish it in their press, they would provide the Republic of Letters with the greatest benefit, so that we shall have al-Farghānī in a cleaner and more complete state'). He is referring to the Medici Oriental Press, set up in Rome in 1584.

30 Golius, *Notae*, p. 1: '... who (al-Qiftī) calls him, differently from the others, "Aḥmad", as also, on the evidence of Christmann, the old Latin version does' ('... qui eum, secus atque alii, Ahmedem vocat; uti quoque vetus Latina versio habet, Christmanno teste'). The reference is to Christmann, *Muhamedis Alfragani Elementa*, p. 4: '... siquidem in Latina versione bibliothecae Palatinae tribuitur illi nomen proprium Ametus, hoc est, Ahmed sive Muhamed: ubi ita scribitur: *Incipit liber de aggregationibus scientiae stellarum et principis caelestium quem Ametus filius Ameti dictus Alfraganus compilavit 30 capitulis*'.

and a half of the 30 chapters, finishing in Chapter 9 ‘On the Names of the Countries and Cities Known on the Earth and What is in Each Clime of It <the Earth>’.<sup>31</sup> Of these pages, 231 are devoted to Chapter 9.<sup>32</sup> In this chapter al-Farghānī merely gives lists of cities belonging to each clime (a total of four and a half pages). Golius provides a comprehensive gazetteer, drawing material from Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic, Persian and contemporary sources (as well as from his own experience), to describe the characteristics of each city, its boundaries, the countryside that surrounds it and the dependent or neighbouring habitations, the etymology of its name (often involving aetiological stories), the variants of its name (in many languages), important events in its history (often with dates given in both *anni hijrae* and *anni domini*), the religions and cults practised there and places of pilgrimage within the place, and Arabic poems about the city. Thus, an account of Jerusalem could spread over six pages, Antioch over five.<sup>33</sup> This gazetteer bears a resemblance to other Arabic or Arabic-derived works of geography, such as Leo Africanus’s *Descrizione d’Africa* and al-Makrīzī’s *Description of Spain*. But the closest resemblances are to *Mu’jam al-buldān* (*Dictionary of Countries*) of Yāqūt and *Taqwīm al-Buldān* (*Geography*) of Abū ’l-Fidā’, both major sources for Golius. The publishers bring to the fore this aspect of the *Notae* when they refer to it in the preface as a ‘complete treasure house of Oriental antiquities or historical geography’.<sup>34</sup> They also add a twenty-page index of the proper names in the *Notae* to give the reader easy access to this huge compendium, which is additional to the index of places and climes in al-Farghānī’s text at the beginning of the book.<sup>35</sup> As an

31 The notes finish half way through the fourth clime, with Cyprus, on p. 38, line 4 of the Arabic. Note that one Arabic manuscript draws attention to this aspect of al-Farghānī’s work (if it is not merely an extract): Teheran, Dānishgāh MS 2031 (*Asmā’ al-mudun wa-l-buldān al-ma’rūf*, ‘Names of the Known Countries and Cities’). See Sezgin, *Geschichte*, 6: 159.

32 Golius, *Notae*, pp. 75–306.

33 Jerusalem: *ibid.*, pp. 137, 136bis, 137bis, 138, 139 and 140; Antioch: *ibid.*, pp. 278–82.

34 Golius, *Alfraganus*, sig. \*3r: ‘Pro singulari et absoluto quodam antiquitatum Orientalium seu Geographiæ historicæ thesauro habendæ’. See p. 83 below. Considering the similarity in subject matter, these notes may be related to another work of Golius that had been left unfinished at his death, according to Gronovius, *Laudatio funebris*, pp. 20–21: ‘Nonnullis, nisi aetas ingravescentis et varia impedimenta eum tardassent, ultimam manum imposuisset. ... Lexicon Geographicum et historicum, in quo omnia locorum et hominum per Orientem nomina explicarentur, inchoaverat.’ (‘He would have completed some works, if old age had not set in and various hindrances had not slowed him down ... . He had started on a geographical and historical lexicon in which all the names of places and men in the Orient were explained’). This lexicon has not been identified.

35 A further index, Golius, *Alfraganus*, sig. \*\*1r: ‘Index rerum quæ Elementis Astronomicis Alfergani continentur’, gives all the astronomical themes in al-Farghānī’s work itself (not the *Notae*).

example of the detail into which Golius goes in describing a place we may take a selection of sentences from the description of Ḥarrān:

Ḥarrān, with *tashdīd*, which the Greeks write as *Χαρράν* and *Χάρια* and the Latins as *Charrae* or *Carrae*, since the sound of *heth* is expressed in this way<sup>36</sup>... <its various names, and geographical position> ... is a very well-known city among Roman and Greek writers ... <quotation from Ammi-  
 anus Marcellinus, Book XXIII>. ... One reads in Abū 'l-Fidā' that its earth is a red colour, that the city is built on a plain, that it does not enjoy a great number of trees or water, but that water is sought for in wells and in springs, brought from outside by canals ... <quotations from Yāqūt and Stephanus Byzantinus>. ... Both Oriental and other writers, not entirely ignorant of sacred scriptures, derive the name from Haran, the brother of Abraham <but the evidence of Genesis, Chapter 11, does not square with this> ... . Ḥarrān is said to be the first city that was built after the Flood, since it is not very far from Mount Ararat where the Ark came to rest. ... <another etymology of the city's name> ... . It was called 'the city of the Sabaeen sect' or 'Sabans', who worshipped the army of the sky and the stars as divinities or beings ensouled with divine minds, taking up again the antiquity of their religion from Noah: it is very likely that that 'mother of all alternative idolatry' took its origin from that time and place. By a law of Muhammad, however, which was drawn up for the people for paying taxes, they were accepted as 'maguses', no less than Christians and Jews, because they were 'people of the Book'—that is, those following a religion contained in a book. The focus of the city of Ḥarrān was a tribunal and a temple, on a hill raised <above the city>, so that the pagan name 'Ḥarrānite' often became used for 'Sabaeen' or 'Sabite', which means 'worshipper of the stars'. As for their doctrine, sacrifices, other rites, festivals and the fact that they placed their qibla—that is, the direction which they face during prayers—towards the north, many of these matters are dealt with in Ibn al-Nadīm in the last part of his *Catalogue*. He, and Ibn al-Qiftī, mention many Ḥarrānites as outstanding, especially in the mathematical and philosophical sciences. Among them are some who are not unknown to Europe for their writings: Thābit ibn Qurra and Muḥammad ibn Jabīr ibn Sinān al-Battānī, who is usually called by us 'Albategnius' ... <a quotation from Bar Hebraeus>. ... After the conquest of Baghdad,

36 Golius is referring to the doubling of the consonant (*tashdīd*) and the initial hard 'h' which is reflected in the Greek and Latin spellings of the name.

Hulagu, the king of the Tartars, making for Aleppo, occupied Ḥarrân and caused it great damage. The city fell more and more into ruin, so that it is said to have few inhabitants nowadays, and these are mostly Turks and Jews given over to banditry.<sup>37</sup>

The subject which comes second in terms of coverage is that of the epochs of different peoples, to which the first chapter is devoted. Golius, being a mathematician himself, takes care to explain the astronomical aspects of the different lengths and divisions of the year. But the majority of his remarks concern the different religions, feasts and customs of each of the peoples whose calendar is described: for example, the mention of the months of the Persians gives him the chance to discuss Zoroastrianism, Mithras, the Persian language, the Dæmonurgia of the Persians and Persian festivals.<sup>38</sup> Here is an example from this section:

37 Golius, *Notae*, pp. 249–52: ‘*حاران* *Harrân*, cum Tesdid, ut etiam Græci *Χαρράν* et *Χάρια* et Latini *Charræ* seu *Carræ* scribunt, ut ita litteræ Heth sonus exprimat. ... Notissimum Romanis et Græcis scriptoribus oppidum. ... Terram ejus colore rubram esse apud Abulfedam legitur, urbem in plano exstructam, nec arborum nec aquæ copia gaudere, sed hanc puteis, externisque per canales fontibus peti ... . Quod tamen tum Orientales, tum alii Scriptores, Sacrarum non prorsus ignari litterarum, ab Abrahæ fratre Haran deducunt ... *Harrân* primam esse urbem, quæ post diluvium ædificata fuerit, sicuti non adeo procul dissidet à monte Ararat ubi consistit Arca. ... Dicebatur autem *مدينة الصابية* *Urbs sectæ Sabaicæ*, sive *الصابية* *Sabarum*; qui nempe exercitum Cœli et sidera colebant, tanquam Numina seu divinis animata mentibus; religionis suæ antiquitatem inde à Noacho repetentes. Nimirum ab eo inde tempore initium illa cepit, mater omnis alterius Idololatriæ. Lege tamen Muhammedis in clientelam pendendi tributis pacto, recepti sunt uti et *الماجوس* *Magusæi*, non minus quam Christiani et Judæi, quod *اهل الكتاب* essent, id est, *religionem sectarentur libro comprehensam*. In urbe *Harrân* primarium ipsis erat tribunal et delubrum, in editiore colle; ita ut gentile nomen *حارانى* *Haranita* sæpe usurpari soleat pro *صابى* *Sabius* seu *Sabita*, qui est *stellarum cultor*. De eorum doctrina, sacrificiis, aliisque ritibus, festis, et ad Septentrionem ipsorum *قبلة* *Kibla* i.e., tractu quem inter precandum respiciunt, pluribus tractat Ibn Nedîm in postrema Bibliothecæ suæ parte; qui etiam, uti quoque Ibn Kafta complures recenset *Harranitas*, scientia imprimis Mathematica et Philosophica præstantes. Inter quos sunt, per scripta sua Europæ non incogniti *ثابت بن قره* *Thabit ben Kora*, et *جابر بن سنان البتاني* *Muhammed fil. Giabir fil. Sinân Albettanius*, hinc *Albategnius* appellari nobis solitus. ... Post expugnatum Bagdadum Helacou Tatarum Rex, per Mesopotamiam tendens Halebum, occupavit *Harrân*, magnoque detrimento affecit. A quo tempore magis magisque concidit urbs, ut paucos nunc habere incolas dicatur, eosque fere Turcas et Judæos latrociniis deditos.’

38 Golius, *Notae*, pp. 24 and 22. He left a Persian dictionary unfinished at the time of his death. It was posthumously published in Edmund Castell's *Lexicon heptaglotton* (London, 1669). Golius's interest in Persian towards the end of his life may be reflected in its prominence in these *Notae*. Gronovius, *Laudatio funebris*, p. 20, refers to this interest in

*Ferwardin māh*] Most of them call the month *Ferurdin*, but some call it *Ferudin*. The Persians for the most part add to the names of the months the syllable *māh*, which means ‘month’, to distinguish them from days with the same name. Therefore, they also write them as one word: *ferwardinmāh*. ... Those names of months, as of the three hundred <and sixty> days and five additional days, are taken from gods or demons and angels (they call them *malā’ika*), which the old religion of the Persians and Magians used to insist presided over each one of them, as Qazwīnī, Quṭb al-Dīn and other Persian writers record. For, together with other races of the Orient, the Persians claimed that ‘the matters of the inferior world were dispensed through angels’. For each particular day, they [the angels] had their talisman (*ṭilasm*) and their sacred names (*zamzama*), and they <the people> were warned of what they had to do or avoid doing among sacred and profane <activities> through the series and alternations of the days. Their superstition had progressed so far that each day they had to make a choice of clothing, food, drink and perfumes, as Qazwīnī and others recall, and Ibn al-Khaṭīb al-Rāzī in the book which is entitled *Sirr al-Maktūm* arranged in tables for each day the particular observations of these matters.<sup>39</sup>

The chapters on cosmology and astronomy as such receive few or no notes. There are no notes to Chapters 4, 5 and 7, and only one to Chapter 6 concerning the zenith (see Appendix 1).

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Persian just before his death: ‘Persicam linguam etsi jamdudum quasi extrema linea amare coepisset’ (‘He had begun to love the Persian language, although he was already, as it were, at the ultimate terminus <of his life>’).

39 Golius, *Notae*, p. 20: ‘فروردین ماه’ *Fervardīnma*] Plerique tamen mensem *Ferurdin*, et quidam *Ferudin* vocant. Mensium nominibus plerunque addunt Persæ vocem *ماه*, quæ *mensem* notat, ut à cognominibus diebus distinguant: ideoque et conjunctim scribunt, ut *فروردینماه*: ... Nomina autem mensium ipsa, ut et tricenorū dierum, et quinque *ἐπαγομένων*, desumpta sunt à Diis vel Dæmonibus et Angelis (nam *ملائكة* vocant); quos iisdem præesse vetus Persarum et Magorum religio dictabat: quemadmodum *Cazvinus*, *Cotbodinus*, et alique scriptores Persici tradunt. Enimverò cum aliis quoque Orientis Gentibus Persæ statuebant *العالم الاسفل بالملائكة اصلاح* *per angelos dispensari res inferioris Mundi*. Die quolibet peculiare illis *طلسمه وزممة* *τέλεσμα suum et sacrae voces* erant; et quid ipsi in sacris ac profanis sectarentur vel caverent, dierum serie et vicibus monebantur: eò etiam progressà superstitione, ut amictus, cibi, potus et odorum quotidie delectum haberent; uti *Cazvinus* et alii recensent. Et *ابن الخطيب الرازي* in libro quem inscripsit *سرالمكتوم*, particularem earundem rerum observationem ad singulos dies in tabulas digessit.’

The twelfth-century translations of al-Farghānī were intended to provide direct help for students of astronomy. *On the Science of the Stars* was regarded as affording an easy approach to, or even a substitute for, Ptolemy's *Almagest*, and was frequently copied in medieval manuscripts, while being a major source of John of Sacrobosco's *Sphaera*—the core text of the university curriculum in astronomy (the seventh liberal art). It remained popular as an astronomical manual into the age of printing, and it is not by chance that this text, and this text alone, was printed alongside the corresponding astronomical work of al-Battānī annotated by Regiomontanus (Johannes Müller von Königsberg); the title of this book indicates that Regiomontanus lectured on al-Farghānī in Padua University.<sup>40</sup> It was also lectured on at Wittenberg c. 1536–8 by Copernicus's pupil, Georg Joachim Rheticus, whose books, incidentally, were inherited by Christmann.<sup>41</sup>

Golius's translation, on the other hand, was made when Arabic culture and learning were becoming separate from the pan-Mediterranean educational tradition which had its roots in Ancient Greece. They were being studied in their own right, and not to advance or complete subjects that were already part of the European tradition. Hence, the publishers Johannes Jansonius à Waasberge and the widow of Elizeus Weyerstraet do not advertise Golius's work as adding to the knowledge of astronomy or to the texts useful for

40 *Continentur in hoc libro. RUDIMENTA astronomica Alfragani. Item ALBATEGNIUS astronomus peritissimus de motu stellarum, ex observationibus tum propriis, tum Ptolemæi, omnia cum demonstrationibus geometricis & additionibus Ioannis de Regiomonte. Item Oratio introductoria in omnes scientias mathematicas Ioannis de Regiomonte, Patavii habita, cum Alfraganum publice prælegeret. Eiusdem utilissima introductio in elementa Euclidis. Item Epistola PHILIPPI MELANTHONIS nuncupatoria, ad Senatum Noribergensem. Omnia iam recens prelis publicat* (Nuremberg, 1537), ('Included in this book are: "the Rudiments of Astronomy of al-Farghānī". Likewise, al-Battānī, the most skilled astronomer, "On the Movements of the Stars", taken from both his own and Ptolemy's observations, all with the geometrical demonstrations and additions of John of Regiomont (Regiomontanus). Likewise, a lecture introducing all the mathematical sciences, delivered at Padua, when he lectured in public on al-Farghānī. The same scholar's most useful introduction to Euclid's *Elements*. Likewise, the introductory lecture of Philipp Melanchthon, addressed to the Senate of Nuremberg. All now recently published'). The lectures on al-Farghānī would have taken place in 1464: see E. Rosen, 'Regiomontanus', in *Dictionary of Scientific Bibliography*, 16 vols. (New York, 1975), 11: 348–52; 349. Christmann, *Muhamedis Alfragani elementa*, p. 5, also mentions these lectures. The work remained a point of reference in the teaching of the Jesuits in the late 16th century: see A. Romano, *La Contra-réforme mathématique: constitution et diffusion d'une culture mathématique jésuite à la Renaissance, 1540–1640* (Rome, 1999), p. 273.

41 See Nicolaus Gugler's student handbook, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 7395, fols. 60<sup>r</sup>–85<sup>r</sup>, described in D. Juste, *Catalogus codicum astrologorum Latinorum*, 2 vols. (Paris, 2015), 2: 136–9.

teaching astronomy, but rather they say, as we have seen, that, had Golius completed his notes, they would have been ‘a singular and complete treasure house of Oriental antiquities or historical geography’.<sup>42</sup>

In the seventeenth century we are witnessing the growth of Oriental studies—the attraction of the Arabic language and literature for their own sake and the discovery of the history and geography of the area in which Islam dominated. This is particularly relevant to the list of places in al-Farghānī. Christmann had despaired of making sense of this list, because the names had become so corrupt in the Latin and Hebrew. The availability of an Arabic manuscript made it possible for the first time to recognize the names. And recognition of the names enabled one to comment on each of them, no matter how distant the places were from Leiden.

Astronomical knowledge, then, has given place to ‘exotic’ knowledge. From the words of the publishers’ preface, the ‘exotic learning’ is that of al-Farghānī,<sup>43</sup> with which Golius stocks a ‘treasure house’ (*thesaurus*).<sup>44</sup> For something to be *exoticus* it had to belong to a different culture or be written in a different language from one’s own. This was the sense of *exoticus* in the *Bibliotheca exotica* of Georg Draud (1610),<sup>45</sup> a catalogue of books in ‘foreign languages’ (*linguae peregrinae*) for sale at the Frankfurt Book Fair, and in Jacques Cappel’s *Historia sacra et exotica ab Adamo usque ad Augustum* (1613), a calendrical history taken from foreign as well as biblical sources.<sup>46</sup> For the meaning ‘foreign’ Golius, at least, used the adjective *exterus*.<sup>47</sup> But *exoticus* could suggest something strange and wonderful, in addition to its foreignness. This surely is the sense of the word in Engelbert Kämpfer’s *Five Fascicles of Exotic Delights relating to Society, Nature and Medicine, in which Various Accounts, Observations and Descriptions of the Matters of the Persians and of Further Asia are Contained* (1712).<sup>48</sup>

42 See n. 34 above.

43 Golius, *Alfraganus*, sig. \*2<sup>r</sup>: ‘in quo <Golius> exotitarum eruditionum suarum <al-Farghānī’s> copiam effunderet’. See p. 83 below.

44 Ibid., sig. \*3<sup>r</sup>: ‘pro singulari et absoluto ... thesauro’. See p. 83 below.

45 Georg Draud, *Bibliotheca exotica, sive catalogus officinalis librorum peregrinis linguis usualibus scriptorum, videlicet Gallica, Italica, Hispanica, Belgica, Anglica, Danica, Bohemica, Ungarica etc. omnium quotquot in officinis bibliopolarum indagari potuerant et in Nundinis Francofurtensibus præstant ac venales habentur* (Frankfurt, 1610; repr. Frankfurt, 1625).

46 Jaques Cappel, *Historia sacra et exotica ab Adamo usque ad Augustum* (Sedan, 1613).

47 Golius, *Notae*, p. 2: ‘العجم Barbarorum seu Exterorum] Ita Arabes vocant populos omnes, quorum sermonem proprium non intelligunt’ (‘The Arabs call all those people whose language they do not understand *a’jam*—barbarian or foreign’).

48 Engelbert Kämpfer, *Amœnitatum exotitarum politico-physico-medicarum fasciculi v, quibus continentur variae relationes, observationes et descriptiones rerum Persicarum et Ulterioris Asiae* (Lemgo, 1712).

The frontispiece shows a turban-clad young man presenting to a queen a tray on which there are plants, perfumes and spices in porcelain containers, and from which hangs a cloth with the words 'Amœnitates exoticæ'. This sense of *exoticus* (even without the foreignness) is probably also present in an account of 'exotic' medicines which include the beans of St Ignatius, the china of China (sic), the ipecacuanha (from South America), the Panacea of the French and a new cure for hernia, in Michael Bernhard Valentin's *Polychresta exotica* (1700).<sup>49</sup>

In bringing together *res exoticæ*, Golius could be seen as joining the collectors who filled their *Kunstkabinetten* and proto-museums with *exotica*, an increasingly common phenomenon in the late sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth.<sup>50</sup> Among these was Bernardus Paludanus, a fellow citizen of Leiden (1550–1633), who amassed curiosities from the Middle East and further afield, which included *res naturales* and *res exoticæ*,<sup>51</sup> and Manfredo Settala (1600–1680), the catalogue of whose museum in Milan included *Exotica varia artefacta in India, & alibi* ('Various exotic things manufactured in India and elsewhere').<sup>52</sup>

The treasures of the Arabs, even if not described as 'exotic', were advertised in the *Specimen historiae Arabum* published by Edward Pococke (1604–91) in Oxford in 1650.<sup>53</sup> Towards the end of his introduction Pococke relates that 'the Arabs have treasures (*gazæ*) which have not yet been revealed, concerning every kind of subject, with the most noble men of almost every race contributing to their recovery'.<sup>54</sup> His own contribution to this effort is revealing the

49 Michaelis Bernhardi Valentini ... *Polychresta exotica in curandis affectibus contumacissimis probatissima, scil. Fabæ S. Ignatii, China Chinæ, Ipecacuanha, Clyster tabacinus, Pedra del Porco, Panacea Gallorum ut et Nova herniarum cura* (Frankfurt, 1700).

50 J. Raby, 'Exotica from Islam', in *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe*, ed. O. Impey and A. McGregor (Oxford, 1985), pp. 251–8.

51 See E. Jorink, 'Noah's Art Restored (and Wrecked): Dutch Collectors, Natural History and the Problem of Biblical Exegesis', in *Silent Messengers: the Circulation of Material Objects of Knowledge in the Early Modern Low Countries*, ed. S. Dupré and C.H. Lüthy (Berlin, 2011), pp. 153–84 (159–61), and *Making Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: Practice, Objects and Texts, 1400–1800*, ed. P.H. Smith and B. Schmidt (Chicago and London, 2007), p. 202 (within the chapter 'The Uses of Wonder').

52 Paolo Maria Terzago, *Musæum Septalianum Manfredi Septalæ* (Tortona, 1664).

53 *Specimen Historiæ Arabum sive Gregorii AbulFarajii Malatiensis, de origine et moribus Arabum succincta narratio, in linguam Latinam conversa, notisque è probatissimis apud ipsos authoribus, fusiùs illustrata, operi et studio Edvardi Pocockii* (Oxford, H. Hall, 1650). See Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning*, pp. 160–2.

54 Pococke, *Specimen historiae Arabum*, sig. A2<sup>r</sup>: 'Sunt enim Arabibus, in omni literarum genere, gazæ nondum reclusæ, quibus eruendis manum admovere ... habes ubique ferè gentium, nobilissimos viros.'



treasures of Oriental history and society, through editing and translating a small portion of Bar Hebraeus's *History of the Dynasties*, followed by copious notes. The format that Pococke adopts is rather similar to that found in Golius's *Alfraganus*. As in Golius, Pococke's title-page begins with the title in Arabic script, then in Latin, ending with the words 'illustrated profusely with notes from the most reliable authors among them <the Arabs>'.<sup>55</sup> The edition and translation of Barhebraeus's *History* occupy only 15 pages each (unlike Golius, Pococke publishes the Latin translation opposite the Arabic text). A new title-page follows with the words: 'Notes in which very many things which are made to illustrate supremely the history of the Orientals are put forward from the authors of greatest note among them <the Orientals>'.<sup>56</sup> And the notes that come afterwards occupy almost exactly the same number of pages as those of Golius.<sup>57</sup>

There is no evidence that Golius takes anything from Pococke; he could have been occupied with writing his notes at the same time in Leiden as his colleague was writing in Oxford. Instead, each author uses Latin, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew and Persian sources directly, drawing on their own manuscripts. They go into equal detail in their notes; but while Pococke arranges his notes around historical and religious events, and names of historical figures and authors (the history of the Orientals), Golius structures his around the epochs of different races and the names of places (historical geography). As such, they nicely complement each other. It has been claimed that Pococke himself answered the publishers' plea for a 'second Golius' to complete Golius's notes, which would have been very appropriate; but unfortunately there is no solid evidence that this happened.<sup>58</sup> Rather, both works presage in their compass and their sources the great *Bibliothèque Orientale* of Barthélemy d'Herbelot, completed by Antoine Galland in 1697.

Golius's *Alfraganus* has, indeed, come a long way from the *Alfraganus* of John of Seville and Gerard of Cremona, and even that of Jacob Christmann. It is truly a monument of mid-seventeenth century Arabic scholarship. But, alas,

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55 See n. 53 above.

56 Pococke, *Specimen Historiæ Arabum*, p. 33: 'Notæ in quibus aliquam-multa quæ ad historiam Orientalium apprimè illustrandam faciunt, e melioris apud ipsos notæ Authoribus in medium proferuntur.

57 Ibid., pp. 33–339.

58 See W.M.C. Juynboll, *Zeventiende-eeuwsche Beoefenaars van het Arabisch in Nederland* (Utrecht, 1931), p. 141, referring to Christian Friedrich Schnurrer, *Bibliotheca Arabica* (Halle an der Saale, 1811), p. 464.

unlike Pocke's parallel work, it was not completed, and Golius was not able to set out his aims in a preface. It still waits for its treasures to be revealed.

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### Appendix 1

#### *The Four Latin Translations Compared*

In this appendix two short passages from al-Farghānī's *On the Science of the Stars*, chapter 6, are used to show how the translations of John of Seville, Gerard of Cremona, Jacob Christmann and Jacob Golius differ from each other. These passages introduce the habitable part of the earth and explain how night and day are different in different areas of this region.

1) The Arabic reads as follows:<sup>59</sup>

فاذ قدمنا ما كان يجب تقديمه من حركتي الفلك الأولتين فلنأخذ الآن في ذكر المواضع  
المسكونة من الأرض على ما عرفنا واتتهى إلينا وجمل ما يعرض في هذه المواضع من  
دوران الفلك واختلاف الليل والنهار

Fa-idh qaddamnā mā kāna yajibu taqdīmuhu min ḥarakatay al-falak al-awwalatayn fa-la-na'khudhu al-āna fī dhikr al-mawāḍi' al-maskūna min al-arḍ 'alā mā 'arafnā wa-intahā ilaynā wa-jumal mā yu'raḍu (tu'raḍu AS) fī hādhihi al-mawāḍi' min dawarān al-falak wa-ikhtilāf al-layl wa-al-nahār...

فنبول إن دائرة الأفق هي الدائرة التي تفصل بين ما يظهر من السماء فوق الأرض وبين ما يُخفى منها تحت الأرض وقطبها هو على سمت الرأس وهي من الدوائر العظام التي

59 Golius, *Alfraganus*, pp. 19–21; El-Fergānī, *The Elements of Astronomy*, ed. Y. Unat (Cambridge MA, 1998), pp. 21–2, based on AS (= Aya Sofya, MS 2843/2) with variants from CA (Istanbul, Carullah, MS 1279/30) and LE (Leiden, University Library, MS Or. 8418/5).

تقسم السماء بنصفين من أجل أنه ليس لكرة الأرض عند كرة السماء إلا قدر يسير من  
السماء لا يُحسّ

Fa-naqūl inna dā'irat al-ufuq hiya al-dā'irat allatī tafṣilu bayna mā yazharu min al-samā' fawq al-arḍ wa-bayna mā yukhfā minhā taḥta al-arḍ wa-qtūbhā huwa (hiya LE) 'alā samt al-ra's wa-hiya min al-dawā'ir al-'izām allatī taqsumu al-samā' bi-niṣṣayn min ajl annahu laysa li-kurat al-arḍ 'inda kurat al-samā' illā qadr yasīr (scripsimus; bi-sair LEGolius; al-samā' qadr tabayyana CA, AS) min al-samā' lā (mā AS, LEGolius) yuḥassu.

Below is a strictly literal translation of the Arabic,<sup>60</sup> in which the Arabic words are numbered. When more than one English word is needed to translate a single Arabic word, the English words are linked with hyphens:

And<sup>1</sup> since<sup>2</sup> we-have-put-first<sup>3</sup> whose<sup>4</sup> putting-first<sup>7</sup> [of it] was<sup>5</sup> necessary<sup>6</sup> concerning<sup>8</sup> the-first<sup>11</sup> two-movements<sup>9</sup> of-the-orb<sup>10</sup>, let-us-begin<sup>12</sup> now<sup>13</sup> the-account<sup>14</sup> of-the-inhabited<sup>16</sup> places<sup>15</sup> of-the-earth<sup>17</sup> according-to<sup>18</sup> what<sup>19</sup> we-know<sup>20</sup> and<sup>21</sup> has-come<sup>22</sup> to<sup>23</sup> us<sup>24</sup>, and<sup>25</sup> everything<sup>26</sup> that<sup>27</sup> happens<sup>28</sup> in<sup>29</sup> these<sup>30</sup> places<sup>31</sup> of<sup>32</sup> the-rotation<sup>33</sup> of-the-orb<sup>34</sup> and<sup>35</sup> the-difference<sup>36</sup> of-night<sup>37</sup> and<sup>38</sup> day<sup>39</sup>.

... and<sup>40</sup> we-say<sup>41</sup> that<sup>42</sup> the-circle<sup>43</sup> of-the-horizon<sup>44</sup> is<sup>45</sup> the-circle<sup>46</sup> which<sup>47</sup> divides<sup>48</sup> [between]<sup>49</sup> what<sup>50</sup> appears<sup>51</sup> of<sup>52</sup> the-heaven<sup>53</sup> above<sup>54</sup> the-earth<sup>55</sup> and<sup>56</sup> [between]<sup>57</sup> what<sup>58</sup> is-hidden<sup>59</sup> of-it<sup>60</sup> below<sup>61</sup> the-earth<sup>62</sup>. And<sup>63</sup> its-pole<sup>64</sup> is<sup>65</sup> over<sup>66</sup> the-top<sup>67</sup> of-the-head<sup>68</sup>, and<sup>69</sup> it<sup>70</sup> <is one> of<sup>71</sup> the-great<sup>73</sup> circles<sup>72</sup> which<sup>74</sup> divide<sup>75</sup> the-heavens<sup>76</sup> into<sup>77</sup> two-halves<sup>78</sup>, because<sup>79</sup> there-is-not<sup>80</sup> to<sup>81</sup> the-circle<sup>82</sup> of-the-earth<sup>83</sup> <compared> with<sup>84</sup> the-circle<sup>85</sup> of-the-heavens<sup>86</sup> other-than<sup>87</sup> a small<sup>89</sup> quantity<sup>88</sup> of-the-heavens,<sup>90</sup> <which is> not<sup>91</sup> perceptible<sup>92</sup>.

In the following medieval translations I assign the same number to the Latin equivalents to the Arabic words:

2) John of Seville (J):<sup>61</sup>

Et<sup>1</sup> quia<sup>2</sup>, auxiliante<sup>3</sup> Deo<sup>3</sup>, iam<sup>3</sup> premisimus<sup>3</sup> quod<sup>4</sup> debuit<sup>5-6</sup> premiti<sup>7</sup> de<sup>8</sup> utri-que-motibus<sup>9</sup> circuli (celi)<sup>10</sup>, nunc<sup>3</sup> incipiamus<sup>12</sup> commemorare<sup>14</sup> loca<sup>15</sup> terre<sup>17</sup>

60 Words that have to be added in the English are in angle brackets; omitted, in square brackets.

61 The text is taken from Berlin, Staatsbibliothek-Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS lat. F. 307 (956), fol. 20<sup>v</sup> (= B), with the readings of the printed editions (Ferrara, 1493 = Nuremberg 1537) in brackets, except when otherwise stated.

habitabilia<sup>16</sup> secundum<sup>18</sup> quod<sup>19</sup> (+ nos) novimus<sup>20</sup> et<sup>21</sup> pervenit<sup>22</sup> ad<sup>23</sup> nos<sup>24</sup>, et<sup>25</sup> universa<sup>26</sup> que<sup>27</sup> accidunt (accident)<sup>28</sup> his<sup>30</sup> locis<sup>31</sup> (- his locis) de<sup>32</sup> volubilitate<sup>33</sup> circuli<sup>34</sup> et<sup>35</sup> diversitate<sup>36</sup> (B omits 'circuli et diversitate') noctis<sup>37</sup> atque<sup>38</sup> diei<sup>39</sup>....

Dicemusque<sup>40-41</sup> quod (- Dicemusque quod)<sup>42</sup> circulus<sup>43</sup> emisperii<sup>44</sup> sit<sup>45</sup> circulus<sup>46</sup> qui<sup>47</sup> dividit<sup>48</sup> id-quod<sup>50</sup> apparet<sup>51</sup> de<sup>52</sup> celo<sup>53</sup> super<sup>54</sup> terram<sup>55</sup> ab eo-quod<sup>58</sup> occultatur<sup>59</sup> de-eo<sup>60</sup> sub<sup>61</sup> terra<sup>62</sup>. Et<sup>63</sup> eius-axis<sup>64</sup> est<sup>65</sup> semper super<sup>66</sup> cenit (zenith)<sup>67</sup> capitum (capitis)<sup>68</sup>, et<sup>69</sup> est<sup>70</sup> ex (de)<sup>71</sup> circulis<sup>72</sup> maioribus<sup>73</sup> qui<sup>74</sup> dividunt (dividit)<sup>75</sup> celum<sup>76</sup> per medium<sup>77-78</sup>, eo-quod<sup>79</sup> spera<sup>82</sup> terre<sup>83</sup> erga<sup>84</sup> speram<sup>85</sup> celi<sup>86</sup> non-sit<sup>80</sup> quantitas<sup>88</sup> tegendi de-celo<sup>90</sup> aliquid sensibile<sup>92</sup>.

### 3) Gerard of Cremona (G):<sup>62</sup>

Et (- O) postquam<sup>2</sup> premisimus (proposuimus O)<sup>3</sup> cuius<sup>4</sup> premissio<sup>7</sup> fuit<sup>5</sup> necessaria<sup>6</sup> de<sup>8</sup> duobus<sup>9</sup> primis<sup>11</sup> motibus<sup>9</sup> orbis<sup>10</sup>, incipiamus<sup>12</sup> nunc<sup>13</sup> (- O) rememorare<sup>14</sup> loca<sup>15</sup> habitabilia<sup>16</sup> terre<sup>17</sup> secundum<sup>18</sup> quod<sup>19</sup> scimus<sup>20</sup> et<sup>21</sup> pervenit<sup>22</sup> ad<sup>23</sup> nos<sup>24</sup> et<sup>25</sup> summa (summam O)<sup>26</sup> eorum-que<sup>27</sup> accidunt<sup>28</sup> in<sup>29</sup> hiis<sup>30</sup> (- in his -O) locis<sup>31</sup> de<sup>32</sup> revolutione<sup>33</sup> orbis<sup>34</sup> et<sup>35</sup> [+ de] diversitate<sup>36</sup> noctis<sup>37</sup> et<sup>38</sup> diei<sup>39</sup>. ...

Dicamus<sup>41</sup> ergo<sup>40</sup> quod<sup>42</sup> circulus<sup>43</sup> orizontis<sup>44</sup> est<sup>45</sup> circulus<sup>46</sup> qui<sup>47</sup> separat<sup>48</sup> inter<sup>49</sup> illud-quod<sup>50</sup> apparet<sup>51</sup> de<sup>52</sup> cœlo<sup>53</sup> super<sup>54</sup> terram<sup>55</sup> et<sup>56</sup> inter<sup>57</sup> illud-quod<sup>58</sup> occultatur<sup>59</sup> de-eo<sup>60</sup> sub<sup>61</sup> terra<sup>62</sup>, et<sup>63</sup> polus-eius<sup>64</sup> est<sup>65</sup> super<sup>66</sup> summitatem<sup>67</sup> capitum (capitis O)<sup>68</sup> et<sup>69</sup> ipse<sup>70</sup> est de<sup>71</sup> circulis<sup>72</sup> magnis<sup>73</sup> qui<sup>74</sup> dividunt<sup>75</sup> cœlum<sup>76</sup> in<sup>77</sup> duo-media,<sup>78</sup> propterea-quod<sup>79</sup> spera terre apud<sup>84</sup> speram<sup>85</sup> cœli<sup>86</sup> non-habet<sup>80</sup> quantitatem<sup>88</sup> que-tegat (qua tegat) de-cœlo<sup>90</sup> quod sit-sensibile.<sup>92</sup>

Once certain regular syntactical differences between Arabic and Latin have been taken into account, such as the repetition of the pronoun after a relative ('whose putting first of it was necessary'), and the construction of 'to begin' which includes a preposition (*akhadha fi or bi*), we find almost precise single-word equivalents in both translations, and almost the same word order. John is not so literal as Gerard.<sup>63</sup> He adds *auxiliante Deo*,<sup>64</sup> he changes the syntax, he uses the same Latin word for two different Arabic words (*dividit/unt* translates both *tafṣilu* and *taqsimu*, whereas Gerard uses *separat* for

62 The text is taken from ed. Campani, *Alfragano*, p. 76, and Oxford, MS Laud misc. 644, fol. 191<sup>v</sup> (= O)

63 For comments on the literalness of Gerard's style see n. 8 above.

64 The addition of *auxiliante Deo* is distinctive of John of Seville's translations: e.g. in the endings of books in his translation of Abū Ma'shar's *Great Conjunctions*: 'Et quia, auxiliante Deo, iam explicavimus quod exponere voluimus...' IV, 2 [4], ed. K. Yamamoto and C. Burnett 2 vols. (Leiden, 1999), 1: 123, and in his translation of al-Qabīṣī's *Introduction to Astrology*, I [79] and V [17], ed. C. Burnett et al. (London and Turin, 2004), pp. 266 and 358.

the first and *dividunt* for the second). John substitutes the verb *premitti* for the noun in Arabic (*taqdīm*) which is reflected in the noun in Gerard (*premissio*); he avoids the unidiomatic ‘inter ... et inter’; he adds *semper* (‘always’), and substitutes *per medium* (‘through the middle’) for ‘into two halves’. On the other hand, for zenith he retains the transliteration of the Arabic *samt*, whereas Gerard substitutes the Latin term *summitas*;<sup>65</sup> and Gerard substitutes a ‘have’ clause for the copula plus the dative (‘there is to it’), and a relative clause (*que tegat*, ‘which covers’, G) for a noun (*tegenti*, ‘of covering’, J). The two translations are clearly independent of each other here,<sup>66</sup> but imply exactly the same Arabic subtext (including ‘of covering’, implying *bi-sitr*, rather than *bi-sair*, ‘in movement’, as in Golius’s text and the *Aya Sofya* manuscript).

4) Since Christmann’s version is at two removes from the original Arabic it should not be so surprising that the text differs considerably from the two medieval versions. Following the Hebrew translation, the chapter division is different, and an extra section on the 48 Ptolemaic constellations has been added, making 32 chapters altogether.<sup>67</sup> So, with regard to the passages quoted above, the first is missing, while the second occurs in Chapter 7 rather than in Chapter 6.

Christmann (C), p. 29:

Horizon est circulus dividens hemisphærium cæli supra terram conspicuum ab eo quod latet infra terram, cuius polus est punctum verticis. Dividit autem horizon cælum in duas partes æquales, quandoquidem tumor molis terrenæ tantus non est ut possit de capacitate cæli aliquid subtrahere.

Here the Latin is so far from a literal translation of the Arabic that it is not possible to use the suprascript numbers to relate equivalent words. A whole phrase is missing (‘It is one of the great circles’). The meaning has not been changed, but words have been added for clarification (‘two equal parts’ for ‘two halves’) or for aesthetic reasons (*tumor molis terrenæ*, ‘the swelling of the earthly mass’, for the ‘circle of the earth’).

5) Golius’s translation is as follows:<sup>68</sup>

Hisce quidem ita præmissis, quæ de duobus primariis cœli motibus præmitti necesse fuit, instituamus nunc sermonem de terræ habitationibus, quoad

65 It may not be a coincidence that ‘*summitas*’ (height) retains the consonants of the Arabic *samt*, especially since the primary meaning of *samt* is ‘path, tract’ (see p. 81 below) rather than ‘height’.

66 In the description of the lunar mansions (Chapter 20), words and phrases in J also appear in G. A full comparison between the two translations is a desideratum.

67 See Sela, ‘Al-Farghānī on the 48 Ptolemaic Constellations’.

68 The Arabic manuscript used by Golius is Leiden, University Library, MS Acad. 47 (CX), but with some small changes: see Campani, ‘Il “Kitāb al-Farghānī”’, pp. 206–8.

exploratum vel auditum nobis fuit; et de summaris motus cœlestis accidentibus, noctisque et diei varietate, quæ iis locis conveniunt....

Horizon quidem circulus est, qui distinguit inter partem cœli supra nos conspicuam, et partem cœli sub terra conditam; polum habens punctum illud, quod capitis vertici insistit, estque unus ex maximis circulis qui cœlum in duas partes æquales dirimunt, propterea quod terra respectu cœli exiguam modò quantitatem obtinet, quæ sensu percipi nequeat.<sup>69</sup>

The Latin is, once again, so free that we cannot use superscript numerals to show the equivalents in Arabic. In the first phrase alone, a subordinate clause introduced by a conjunction is replaced by an ablative absolute construction, the first-person plural has disappeared; *hisce* (as the pronoun anticipating the relative *que*), *quidem* (a filler indicating mood), and *ita* ('in this way') have all been added. In the second phrase a more elegant word has been introduced for 'first' (*primarius*), in the third, *dhikr* as 'speech' is a derived form from its primary meaning 'memory', which is preserved in the two medieval translations (*commemorare* J, *rememorare* G). In the fourth phrase, *intahā* ('it arrived at its destination') is translated psychologically ('was heard'), and Golius neglects the precise sense of *dawarān* ('rotation'), referring only to *motus*.<sup>70</sup>

It is curious that two of the terms used by Golius are the same as those chosen by Christmann—*conspicius* and *duæ partæ æquales*—and *vertex* is used by both translators where the medieval translators have *cenit* and *summitas* for *samt*. However, while it is clear that Golius knew Christmann's work (see p. 67 above), he does not appear to copy it. Parallels in the choice of words can, rather, be found in Golius's *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* which had been published sixteen years previously (1653). Here we find:

1. *qaddama*: 'præcedere et præire jussit. Præfecit. Præmisit'. The last is Golius's choice here (as it was for the medieval translators).
2. *falak*: *orbis cœlestis*. Golius chooses *orbis* (the choice of G, where J has *celum/circulus*).
3. *'akhadha*: *cæpit, incepit, instituit*. Golius chooses the last meaning.
4. *samt rās* (sic): *cœli vertex*. Here Golius keeps *vertex*, but chooses *caput* (the literal translation) rather than *cælum*.
5. *maskūn*: *habitatus, habitabilis geogr*. Taking the adjective with the Arabic *al-mawāḍi'* (places), Golius makes one word: *habitatio*.

On the other hand, while the *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* gives 'memoria, firma retentio' for *dhikr*, it does not provide *sermo*, although this is a good fit for the context in Golius's

69 Golius, *Alfraganus*, pp. 19–21.

70 It is worth noting that *exiguam* implies *yasīr*, our conjecture for the original Arabic text (see p. 77 above), rather than *bi-sitr*, as implied by the medieval translations, or *bi-sair* as given in Golius's own edition.

translation. And the Lexicon's *pervenit* for *intihā* is, as we have seen, not adopted by Golius. One gets the impression that Golius would not have slavishly taken over the definitions given in his dictionary, but rather would have used the Latin word or phrase most appropriate to the context. He would have thus followed the precept of Cicero, that one should give the sense of the whole phrase, rather than provide single words one by one, like a money changer counting out the coins.<sup>71</sup>

In comparison with his medieval predecessors he makes the Latin more elegant, but in doing this he also catches the nuances of the meaning of the Arabic: for example, *primarius* has the significance of 'basic' or 'primary', which is the sense here, and *dhikr* is an 'account' rather than a 'memory'. At the same time, however, he distinguishes between *tafṣilu* and *taqsumu*, translating the first as *distinguit*, the second as *dirimunt*.<sup>72</sup>

Golius comments on the passage on the zenith is his only note to Chapter 6:

Page xx, line 18 *Samt al-rās*] The highest point of the sky. In the school of the astronomers it is called barbarously and corruptly 'zenith', <the result of> the letter 'm' being divided into two—'n' and 'i'—by the scribes. For *semt* should be written, as is explained here. For that word properly denotes a 'track' or a 'path', and with the adjunct: 'the track or the point of the top of the head'. Thus also *naẓīr* is called the opposite of the track of the sky, that is, opposite to the zenith, that is, the top of the head, which (*naẓīr*) is accustomed to being called 'track of the foot' or *tractatus pedis*.<sup>73</sup>

71 Jerome, *Epistola LVII Ad Pammachium De optimo genere interpretandi*, quoting Cicero's introduction to his translation of two orations, of Aeschines and Demosthenes: '... in quibus non pro verbo verbum necesse habui reddere, sed genus omne verborum vimque servavi. Non enim me ea adnumerare lectori putavi oportere, sed tanquam adpendere', ed. G.J.M. Bartelink (Leiden, 1980), p. 13. Translation *ad sensum* (and to preserve the same style and 'feel' as the original language) is, of course, advocated by Leonardo Bruni in his *De interpretatione recta*, ed. P. Viti (Naples, 2004), and commonly in the Renaissance. Differences between medieval and Renaissance translations from Arabic, and variations in Renaissance approaches have most recently been discussed by Hasse, *Success and Suppression*, chapter 3, 'Philology: Translators' Programs and Techniques', pp. 69–133.

72 For the record, the *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* gives *elementum* as one meaning of *aṣl* (in the title), translates *faṣala* (whence *tafṣilu*) both as *distinguit* and *diremit*, and *qasama* (whence *taqsimu*) only as *divisit*; *primarius* does not appear in the *Lexicon* at all.

73 Golius, *Notae*, p. 71: 'سمت الرأس'] Culmen cœli in Astronomorum schola Barbarè et corruptè *Zenith* dicitur: litterà *m* in duas, *n* et *i*, divisâ à scribariis. Nam *Semt* scribendum, quod hîc exprimitur. Ea autem vox propriè *tractum* vel *viam* notat; et cum adjuncto *tractum* seu *punctum verticis*. Ita quoque *نظير Nadir* dicitur cœli tractus *oppositus*, scilicet *السمت vertici*: qui etiam *سمت القدم tractatus pedis* vocari solet'. Cf. Christmann's commentary on the same passage, *Muhamedis Alfragani elementa*, p. 31: 'Vertex capitis dicitur polus horizontis, quem corruptè nominant *Zenith*, cùm Arabes scribant *Semith*:

Here we can compare the term with the entry Golius's *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum*, which gives very similar information:

*samt*] a path, a track which someone takes; *samt rās*, the highest point of the sky, over the head, hence popularly 'zenith' which, corruptly for *zemt* or *semt*, has crept into the schools.<sup>74</sup>

Golius also occasionally comments on the words he translates, for instance, giving the literal (*ad verbum*) meaning: 'When paganism was still thriving', or, literally, 'in the time of ignorance'.<sup>75</sup>

And he wishes to discern the mind of the author:

The denser <it is> ] The meaning of this word is 'the clearer and more perspicuous'. But since the purity and clarity of the medium make not so much for increasing <the size of> the visible thing as for it to be transmitted now more purely and more distinctly, and increase seems rather to be sought from the density of the medium, the words are made utterly suitable for the Truth and the mind of the Author, as if *kathufa* had been written.<sup>76</sup>

## Appendix II

### Johannes Jansonius à Waasberge and the widow of Elizeus Weyerstraet's preface to Golius's edition, translation and notes to al-Farghānī's *On the Science of the Stars*.<sup>77</sup>

punctum vertici oppositum appellatur Nathir, quasi dicas punctum simile: est enim illud quasi alter polus horizontis, nobis depressus' ('The pole of the horizon is called the top of the head, which they call corruptly "zenith", since the Arabs write *Semith*. The point opposite the top <of the head> is called *naẓīr*, as if you said 'a similar point'. For it is, as it were, the other pole of the horizon, beneath us'). *Naẓīr* means both 'similar' and 'opposite'.

74 *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum*, s.v. سمت: 'Via, tractus quem quis tenet. Via recta سمت راس: cœli vertex, capiti imminens, hinc vulgo zenit, quod depravatè pro zemt seu semt irrepsit in scholas'.

75 Golius, *Notae*, p. 4: 'Vigente adhuc paganismò, seu ad verbum ignorantie tempore'. The reference is to pre-Islamic times, the *jāhiliyya*.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 64: *كلما صفا* Quo densior] Ipsa quidem verbi hujus significatio est, quo clarior est et limpidior. Sed cum puritas claritasque medii facia<n>t non tam ad rei visibilis speciem augendam, quam ut ea purior modò ac distinctior transmittatur; augmentum verò petendum potiùs videatur à medii densitate: veritati et Autoris menti verba utcunque accommodata sunt, ac si كثر scriptum fuisset.'

77 Golius, *Alfraganus*, sigs \*<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup>–\*<sub>3</sub><sup>r</sup>. The orthography and capitalization of the original has been retained, but punctuation has been modernized.



Lectori benevolo typographus salutem!

Anni jam elapsi sunt bene multi, LECTOR BENEVOLE, cum celeberrimi ex antiquioribus auctoris ALFERGANI Elementis Astronomicis, scripto sane in nobilissimo doctrinæ genere eximio, nec nostræ laudis aut commendationis indigo, ex fonte suo, id est Arabicâ Linguâ, recognoscendo et, pro quam par erat, annotationibus illustrando, Viri Clarissimi JACOBI GOLII, Mathematicum et Linguarum Orientalium in inclyta LEYDA Batavorum, dum viveret, Prof. Publ. erudita manus sese admovit. Nec immerito gratulari sibi Alferganus poterat quod, post tot secula peregrinis in oris hospes, Virum invenisset, quo singulari cultore, vernaculo sermone exciperetur non tantum, sed et fido interprete, communi Eruditorum orbi, sub felici æternitatis omine, novâ industriâ transcriberetur, tam certe quam GOLIUS /\*2<sup>v</sup>/ ipse, oblato, in quo exoticarum eruditionum suarum copiam effunderet monumentumque exigeret ære perennius, campo uti amplissimo, ita pulcherrimo. Neque, quantum per publicas privatasque occupationes licuit, cœpto operi defuit, id sibi palmarium ducens, ne quid minus elaboratum aut dignissimo auctore non condignum promeret. Verum enimvero, uti ardua humanæ spei insperato plerumque nec optato casui subjacent, antequam propositam telam pertexere licuerit, invida ecce Parca vitale filum abrumpere properavit, ut sic, prius vivendi spatio quam scribendi negotio finito, imperfectum opus, magno utique cum Reipubl. Literariæ dolore ac desiderio, post se reliquerit. Interim ne ipsæ hæ suo merito luce dignissimæ lucubrationes indignis mergerentur tenebris et suo auctori contumulerentur, quin potius Viri meritissimi immortalam famam, cum cæteris quæ publico dedit, assererent, neque adeo literatus orbis tam præclaro nec facilis jacturæ ornamento, funere velut et luctu geminato, privaretur, fieri aliter non decuit, quin ipsi Alfergani operi Golianæ NOTÆ (sive quam earum Fata indulgere particulam) fidâ manu adjunctæ, publico usui unâ communicarentur, vel eâ spe ac voto: si forte quando alter GOLIUS exsur/\*3<sup>r</sup>/gere in locum et quod relictum est telæ pertexere inde animari velit. Cæterum quam rerum memorabilium ac rarioris eruditionis supellectilem Notæ hæ Golianæ suppeditent—jure suo, si absolvi contigisset, pro singulari et absoluto quodam antiquitatum Orientalium seu Geographiæ historiciæ thesauro habendæ—ipse annexus index, quem quâ fieri potuit industriâ, pro ampliori usu concinnandum curavimus, curioso Lectori haud obscure exponet. Quem ne in limine diutius moremur, hisce valere jubentes, auctoris meritissimi omniumque votis citius erepti memoriam gratâ mente culturum, et hanc quam publicando operi impendimus operam, solito favore excepturum haud dubitamus.

Translation:

The printer gives his greetings to the kind reader.

A good many years have now elapsed, kind reader, since that brilliant man, Jacob Golius, public professor of mathematics and Oriental languages in the famous Leiden of the Batavians, before his death, put his hand to editing from its source, that is, from the Arabic language, and illustrating with annotations (as far as was fitting), the *Astronomical Elements* of Alferganus, a very celebrated author among the ancients— an excellent work, certainly belonging to the most noble kind of doctrine, and not lacking our praise or commendation. And Alferganus could deservedly congratulate himself that, after being a stranger for so many centuries in foreign lands, he had found a man by the provision of whose singular attention he should not only be taken up in his native language [that is, Arabic], but also, by his new effort as a faithful interpreter, be transferred to the whole world of scholars, under a happy omen of eternity—as certainly as by Golius himself, into whom he <Alferganus> could pour out the riches of his exotic learning and demand a monument ‘more lasting than bronze’ (Horace, *Odes*, III.30). As the field is most large, so it is most beautiful. Nor, as far as he <Golius> was allowed by his public and private occupations, did he skimp on the work he had taken up, thinking that his reward was that he should not produce anything less adept or unworthy of a very worthy author. But, as the difficulties of human hope are subject to fate that is neither wholly expected nor desired, before he could bring the proposed web to its completion, behold! envious Fate hurried to break off the vital thread; so that, since his lifetime ended before the task of writing, he left behind him an incomplete work, to the great sadness and regret of the Republic of Letters. In the meantime, so that these vigilant studies, most worthy of their merited light, are not submerged in unworthy darkness and buried with their author, but rather should claim the immortal fame of the most worthy man, together with the other things which he gave to the public, and so that the literate world should not be deprived of such a famous ornament which cannot easily be thrown away, by, as it were, a double funeral and mourning, it should not happen otherwise than that the notes of Golius on this work of Alferganus (or the small part of them that the Fates spared), added by a faithful hand, should at the same time also be shared for public use, in the hope and desire that, perhaps at some time another Golius should wish to rise to the occasion and should be inspired to weave what has been left of the web. For the rest, the added index, which we have made sure, with as much diligence as possible, should be appropriate for wider use, will very clearly explain to the curious Reader what furnishing of memorable things and rarer learning these Golian notes provide—rightly, if he had happened to complete them, to be regarded as a singular and complete treasure house of Oriental antiquities or historical geography! But, so that we do not delay any further on the threshold, bidding ‘Goodbye’ to these things, we do not doubt that the reader will cultivate with a grateful

mind the memory of a most meritorious author, too quickly snatched away (as all will agree), and that he will accept with his usual favour this effort that we have made to publish the work.

### Appendix III

#### *The Titles of al-Farghānī's On the Science of the Stars*

Since a plethora of titles has caused scholars to wonder whether more than one work is involved, it seems useful to run through the titles found in Arabic, Hebrew and Latin.<sup>78</sup>

1) The same title appears in Arabic and the two medieval Latin translations: *The Book of Muḥammad ibn Kathīr al-Farghānī on the Summaries of the Science of the Stars and the Principles of the Celestial Movements: Kitāb Muḥammad ibn Kathīr al-Farghānī fī jawāmi' 'ilm al-nujūm wa-uṣūl al-ḥarakāt al-samāwīya; Liber Alfragani in quibusdam collectis scientie astrorum et radicum motus planetarum* (J; *motus singular, and planetarum* rather than 'celestial'), shortened to *in scientia astrorum et radicibus motuum celestium; Liber de aggregationibus scientie stellarum et principis celestium motuum quem Ametus filius Ameti qui dictus est Alfraganus compilavit* (G).<sup>79</sup>

MS Leiden, Acad. 47 and consequently Golius reverse the two phrases in the Arabic title: *The Book of Muḥammad ibn Kathīr al-Farghānī on the Celestial Movement and the Summaries of the Science of the Stars (Kitāb [+ Muḥammad ibn Kathīr Golius] al-Farghānī fī al-ḥarakat al-samāwīya wa-jawāmi' 'ilm al-nujūm)*.

2) A shorter title, based on the second phrase, picks up 'the principles' (*uṣūl*). This short title appears on the title-page of the printed version in Nuremberg 1537: *Rudimenta astronomica*.<sup>80</sup> Golius chooses the word *elementa* for *uṣūl*: *Elementa astronomica*. This corresponds to the Arabic title *Kitāb fī uṣūl 'ilm al-nujūm (Book on the Principles of the Science of the Stars)* found in Cairo, Dār al-Kutub (Egyptian National Library and Archives), MS Mīqāt 944.

78 For the titles in the Arabic manuscripts, see Campani, 'Il "Kitāb al-Farghānī"', p. 219, and Sezgin, *Geschichte*, 6: 150.

79 Note that this title also occurs in an early copy of John of Seville's translation in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek-Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS lat. Fol. 307 (Rose 956), s. xii<sup>ex</sup>/xiii<sup>in</sup>, apparently written by the scribe of the text itself, but in rubric in the top part of a large space originally left blank for the title. Is it possible that the scribe took the title from another source? Note also that in this Berlin manuscript the author's name is given as 'Alfarganūs', a closer transcription of the Arabic name than in any other Latin source I know.

80 See n. 40 above. The text itself receives a fuller title, which is reminiscent of 1) above: *Brevis ac perutilis compilatio Alfragani astronomorum peritissimi totum id continens quod ad rudimenta astronomica est opportunum*. This is the title in the printed edition of 1493, from which the Nuremberg printing derives.

3) A shorter title based on the first phrase gives: *De (or In) scientia astrorum*, used in manuscripts of J's version.

4) A title based on the structure of the text: 'The 30 Chapters' (*Kitāb al-thalāthīn faṣlan*). This is the description of the book in the *Commemoratio librorum* of Gerard of Cremona: *Liber alfragani continens capitula .xxx.* (see p. 62 above). In the Latin versions it is often found as a sequel to title 1).

5) This in turn becomes shortened to *The Chapters (al-fuṣūl)*, which is the title found in the commentaries of al-Qabīṣī and al-Bīrunī (see p. 65 above) and which is used by Francis Carmody as the title of his edition of John of Seville's version: *Al Farghani Differentie*.

6) Sometimes the work is called the *Introduction to the Almagest (al-Mudkhal fi'l-Majisṭī: Aya Sofya, MS 2843)*, the *Summary of the Almagest (Ikhtiṣār al-Majisṭī: in the bibliographies of Ibn al-Nadīm and Ibn al-Qifṭī)*, or even al-Farghānī's *Almagest* (Princeton NJ, Princeton University Library, MS Garrett 967).

7) Finally, the work is simply called *al-Farghānī* 'after the name of its author', as we read in the preface to the Hebrew translation by Jacob Anatoli.<sup>81</sup>

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81 Sela, 'Al-Farghānī on the 48 Ptolemaic Constellations', p. 261, n. 45.

## An Unrecognized ‘Critique’ of John Selden’s *Historie of Tithes*: John Gregory’s 1634 Edition of *View of the Civile and Ecclesiasticall Law* by Thomas Ridley

Mordechai Feingold

When John Gurgany sat down to compose a brief account of John Gregory’s life and death, he was determined to secure literary immortality for his deceased friend. Just as the son of Sirach, who ‘raised his Monumental Pillar to the Patriarch’ with the exclamation ‘*Laudemus Viros gloriosos*’ (Sirach 44:1), so, too, Gurgany sought to exalt Gregory—‘the Miracle of his Age’. Gurgany’s determination was not only edifying but necessary, considering Gregory’s remarkably uneventful life. Born on 10 November 1607 in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, to parents ‘of mean Extraction and Estate’, Gregory’s talents seem to have been discovered by Charles Crooke, formerly student (fellow) of Christ Church and professor of rhetoric at Gresham College who would become rector of Amersham in 1621. Crooke had tutored William Drake, son of Francis Drake—who represented Amersham in Parliament—and in 1624 Crook arranged for Gregory to accompany the younger Drake to Christ Church as a servitor. There, the two were tutored by George Morley, successively bishop of Worcester and Winchester. By 1626 Drake had departed for the Middle Temple, but Gregory remained in Oxford (though Morley appears to have become derelict in his tutorial duties). Gregory graduated BA on 11 October 1628 and shortly thereafter was appointed college librarian. He received his MA on 22 June 1631 and was ordained deacon on 23 September 1632 and priest three months later—both by John Bancroft, bishop of Oxford. Following his ordination, Brian Duppa, dean of Christ Church, appointed Gregory as chaplain (petty canon) of the cathedral; it is not clear why Gregory was never awarded a studentship. Nevertheless, his meagre stipend was augmented in 1635, when the college conferred on him the living of St Mary Magdalen, Oxford.

The contours of Gregory’s life have been laid out in Alastair Hamilton’s informative entry for the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.<sup>1</sup> Yet, in it he refers only fleetingly to Gregory’s first publication—an edition of Thomas Rid-

1 A. Hamilton, ‘Gregory, John (1607–1646)’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), online via <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11467>>.

ley's *View of the Civile and Ecclesiasticall Law* (1634). What seems to be overlooked is the extent to which some of these notes were designed to controvert John Selden's *History of Tithes*, a plan that miscarried—so I argue—owing to Gregory's reluctance to follow the guidelines assigned to him and thereby to cast aspersions on a scholar whom he greatly admired and on a historical narrative he found generally compelling. For all these reasons, Gregory dissembled, or at least deliberately reined in the force of his 'refutation', by 1. choosing to forgo any claim that Selden—whose name virtually escapes mention—was mistaken on any issue, or 2. inserting equivocal remarks that worked to mitigate the force of his own evidence. Before reconstructing Gregory's narrative and tactics, however, I would like to establish the context that gave rise to his edition of Ridley's book.

Gregory's reputation as a scholar was established early. Gurgany recalled how, during their joint exercises for the bachelor's degree, Gregory's 'Worth, like the Rising of the Sun, began to discover it self, darting forth such fair Hopes and Glimmerings of future Perfection'. Gregory's prowess was due not only to his natural gifts but to his indefatigable industry. He had intimated to Gurgany that 'for divers years he studied 16 of every 24 hours, and that with so much appetite and delight, as that he needed not the Cure of Aristotle's drowsiness to awake him'. According to another contemporary, Gregory's 'Candle was not out one night' for full eleven years.<sup>2</sup> Poverty undoubtedly made study especially arduous; it was said he 'lived to the twenty fourth year of his age, before he could buy Books'. Like other impoverished scholars, Gregory undoubtedly relied on the generosity of friends and, especially, on the resources of Christ Church and the Bodleian libraries.

Poverty, and the resultant dependence on patronage, proved decisive in shaping Gregory's literary career. In late May 1629, William Laud, then bishop of London, dispatched to the Bodleian Library the Barocci collection of manuscripts, which the chancellor of the university, the earl of Pembroke, had purchased at Laud's urging. In an addendum to the letter notifying him of the imminent arrival of the gift, Laud requested that the matrixes of the Greek font—which Sir Henry Savile had bequeathed to Oxford—be loaned to Cambridge, where 'a verye learned, painfull & able printer' was preparing to print 'some manuscripts which Dt. Lindsell hath bye him'.<sup>3</sup> Laud referred to an edition of the Greek Church Fathers envisaged by Augustine Lindsell, then dean

2 John Gurgany, 'A Short Account of the Authors Life and Death', in *The Works of the Reverend and Learned Mr. John Gregory*, 4th ed. (London, 1684), sig. A7 (second pagination); David Lloyd, *Memoirs of the Lives ... of those ... that Suffered ... for the Protestant Religion ... in Our Late Intestine Wars* (London, 1668), p. 87.

3 William D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library Oxford*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1890), pp. 70–71.

of Lichfield, who had been an unsuccessful candidate for the Cambridge professorship in Greek two years earlier. Lindsell, together with Patrick Young, the king's librarian, had prepared the catalogue of the Barocci manuscripts, and the two received Pembroke's permission to borrow from the collection even after its arrival in Oxford. Several years later, as we shall see below, Gregory would be drawn into Lindsell's project.

No sooner had the Barocci manuscripts arrived in the Bodleian than Gregory began to inspect them. His attention was drawn particularly to MS Barocci 182, whose author had hitherto not been identified. Gregory, however, noticed that a passage in the manuscript, detailing Christ's healing of a hemorrhaging woman, corresponded to a similar passage cited by John of Damascus, who had attributed the account to John Malalas. Having thus established the identity of the author, Gregory proceeded to compose his 'Observationes in loca quaedam excerpta ex Joh. Malalae Chronographia' (Oxford, Bodleian, MS Rawlinson D 1083), which he probably completed by 1632.<sup>4</sup> The timing of this important discovery was propitious. Laud, now chancellor of Oxford, was pushing for the establishment of a learned press there, analogous to the one he was setting up in London. In November 1632 Laud secured for Oxford University a generous printing charter which included, as one of its missions, Laud's expectation that the university press would publish some of the 'excellent' manuscripts housed in the Bodleian Library.<sup>5</sup> At the very same time Patrick Young sojourned to Oxford to see through the Oxford press his edition of Clement of Rome's epistle to the Corinthians. It is quite likely that Gregory availed himself of the opportunity to befriend the king's librarian.<sup>6</sup>

On 1 April 1633 convocation constituted a committee to oversee the printing of Greek manuscripts. Malalas's *Chronographia* was selected to inaugurate the venture, and William Turner, one of the Oxford University printers, was entrusted with the task. In an agreement dated 5 November 1634 between Turner and the university—overseen by Gregory—the printer was required to use Savile's Greek type (which he would receive from the university on loan) as well as to procure 'as much Arabicke letter as shall bee needefull for the notes of that booke'. The book was to be printed in folio, with a price tag to be determined by the university—to ascertain its affordability—and Gregory was to receive one hundred copies for his pains. To compensate Turner, the university

4 B. Croke, 'The Development of a Critical Text', in *Studies in John Malalas*, ed. E. Jeffreys (Leiden, 2017), p. 316.

5 *The Works of ... William Laud*, ed. W. Scott and J. Bliss, 7 vols. (Oxford, 1847–1860), 5: 78–80.

6 *Clementis ad Corinthios epistola prior*, ed. Patrick Young (Oxford, 1633). Young's address to the reader is dated Oxford, 31 October 1632 (sig. b4).

granted him a seven-year licence to print three almanacs annually.<sup>7</sup> Although in early 1636 John Selden publicly expressed his expectation to see the book in print in the near future,<sup>8</sup> it quickly became apparent that Turner was far more interested in profit than in scholarship, and virtually no progress was made.

As negotiations to publish Malalas continued, Gregory was put to other tasks. In 1607 the civilian lawyer Thomas Ridley published *A View of the Civile and Ecclesiastical Law*—a contribution to a heated contemporary debate over jurisdiction between civil and common lawyers. Ridley served as Archbishop Bancroft's vicar-general, and his book sought not only to defend the equality of both branches of the law—and the primacy of civil law in matters pertaining to mercantile and international law—but to defend the independent jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts. Acknowledging that such independence was owing to the sufferance of the monarch, Ridley appealed to the king to check the aggressive encroachment on the part of common lawyers. He also devoted considerable space to the defence of tithes, citing as evidence a continuous practice dating back to the early Middle Ages. James I was said to have been so pleased with the book that Sir Edward Coke, the most vociferous opponent of civil lawyers, 'prophecised the decay of the common law'.<sup>9</sup> According to William Prynne, Archbishop Laud had instigated the publication of a second edition of the book—among other treatises backing 'Popish Errors, Superstitious, Ceremonies, practises'—in an effort to effect 'the totall corruption and subversion of our Religion'.<sup>10</sup> The task was entrusted to Gregory—perhaps even prior to Laud's promotion on 6 August 1633 to the archbishopric of Canterbury. William Turner, the projected publisher of Malalas, was slated to print the book.

It is difficult to imagine that the project was of Gregory's choosing. If Prynne was correct in assuming that Laud had masterminded the project, Gregory was in all likelihood chosen to bolster the evidentiary basis of certain rites—especially the antiquity of the 'ceremony of consecrating and laying the first stone of a Church or Chappell'—as well as of the antiquity of tithes.<sup>11</sup> To facilitate publication, Gregory was furnished with two assistants. According to an entry in the diary of Thomas Crosfield—fellow of Queen's College—c. 15 January

7 J. Johnson and S. Gibson, *Print and Privilege at Oxford to the Year 1700* (London, 1946), pp. 10–13.

8 John Selden, *De successione in bona defuncti, ad leges Ebraeorum ... accedunt eiusdem De successione in pontificatum Ebraeorum* (London, 1636), p. 184.

9 For the debate, and Ridley's contribution to it, see D.R. Coquillette, *The Civilian Writers of Doctors' Commons, London: Three Centuries of Juristic Innovation in Comparative, Commercial and International Law* (Berlin, 1988), pp. 115–32 and *passim*.

10 William Prynne, *Canterburies doome* (London, 1646), pp. 125–6.

11 *Ibid.*



1633/4, the newly minted book 'had 3 midwives': Gregory wrote the notes; William Chidley (MA Queen's College, 1628) divided Ridley's text into chapters; and Gerard Langbaine (MA Queen's College, June 1633) prepared the index.<sup>12</sup> In his preface, Gregory expressed his hope that the book would 'receive a more indifferent censure' than it had previously garnered, appearing as it would now in a 'season more mature, and more perfectly dispos'd' towards such learned and useful treatise. The English monarch had already harmonized civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions, Gregory added, demonstrating thereby that the state was progressing towards a greater perfection—contrary to frivolous charges, uttered by certain 'unruly Spirits', that the nation was nearing 'her ruine'. These marginal annotations, Gregory stated curtly, were 'timerously let fall', and he did not care to defend them. Gregory's annotations were of two kinds. Some documented the text more fully or elaborated on particulars terms discussed by Ridley. Examples include an elucidation of that clause in the Justinian Code detailing privileges granted to professors and students, and their exemption from public service; comments on the dignitary title of *primicerius*—a Roman designation of administrative heads—and how it was used by Augustine in reference to St Stephen as *Primicerius Martyrum* and by Baldric of Dol when styling St Peter as *Primicerius Apostolorum*; the mention of *castrensi-ani* ('officers of the household') and of schools in the Justinian Code; a legal case illustrating an exception to the code's ruling that infants born more than eleventh months after a husband's death should be declared bastards; and instances attesting to Justinian and Chrysostom's abhorrence of blasphemy.<sup>13</sup>

Longer notes included an account of 'vulgar purgation'—the ordeals of fire, water and combat—among the Anglo-Saxons, in the course of which Gregory found occasion to cite 'learned' Selden's observations on how trials by fire and water had been gradually abolished beginning in the time of Henry III—'rather by desuetude and in reverence to ... Canon Law, than by any Statute of the Realme'—and 'how farre forth they were forbidden'. On the other hand, trial by combat, though abrogated by the canon law, 'is notwithstanding permitted by the Law of this Land, but of very rare and considerate practice'.<sup>14</sup> A mild critique of common lawyers is made in the context of Ridley's discussion of the statutes promulgated during the reigns of Edward II, Edward III and Richard II to curb papal spiritual authority in England. Notwithstanding such safeguards, Gregory glossed, 'even out of these Statutes, have our Professours

<sup>12</sup> Oxford, Queen's College, MS 390, fol. 67<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Ridley, *A View of the Civile and Ecclesiasticall Law*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1634), pp. 40, 46, 47–8, 55, 59.

<sup>14</sup> Ridley, *A View*, p. 86n; *Eadmeri monachi Cantuariensis Historiæ novorum siue Sui sæculi libri VI*, ed. John Selden (London, 1623), pp. 203–5.

of the Common Law wrought many dangers to the Jurisdiction Ecclesiasticall ... pretending all things dealt within those Courtes to be the disherison of the Crowne'. In truth, however, Sir Thomas Smith had already observed 'that the uniting of the Supremacie Ecclesiasticall and Temporall in the King, utterly voideth the use of all those Statutes'. Whatever 'is now wrought or threatned against the Jurisdiction Ecclesiasticall', Gregory added, 'is but in emulation of one Court to another, and by consequent, a derogation of that authority from which all Jurisdiction is now derived, and the maintenance whereof was by those Princes especially purposed'—as can be found in John Cowell's *The Interpreter*.<sup>15</sup>

Even more detailed and substantive were Gregory's notes on hotly contested issues. Two such notes had drawn Prynne's ire. Expounding on an article in the Justinian Code—'None shall presume to erect a Church or Monasterie, till the Bishop of the place, beloved of God ... shall come, and lift up his hands to heaven, and consecrate the place to God by prayer'—Gregory documented at some length how the laying of the first stone by the bishop had been 'of ancient use in the Greeke Church' as had been the practice of consecrating the ground on which the altar stood and the setting up of the crucifix. Such ceremonies, Gregory noted, were still practised by the Catholic Church. He elaborated on the topic in a another lengthy note, pertaining to the 'Right and Title the Diocesan had to a new Church; or Monasterie, and how it stood in comparison of the Patron'. A patron, he expounded, may determine where and how a church might be built, yet such liberty 'was nothing without Execution; and to this the Diocesan was to bee required, as the most principall and most effectuall Agent'. To substantiate the claim, Gregory invoked a canon from the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE) as well as a paragraph from the Euchologion of the Greek Church attesting to the primacy of bishops, before reminding his readers of his earlier quoting from the Euchologion, 'concerning the Cornerstone, which the Bishop crosseth, and layeth for the Foundation' of churches. Furthermore, he added: 'The Right and Title to a Church, and that which belongeeth thereunto is more peculiarly acknowledged by the ... setting up of the Crosse'—a claim he again substantiated with a long extract from the Euchologion.<sup>16</sup>

Less controversial was Gregory's reflection on other rituals. While recounting the manner in which the Catholic Church had converted three Roman festivals honouring pagan gods into more edifying church fasts—adding a fourth festival in respect to the four fasts mentioned in Zachariah 8:18—Gregory

<sup>15</sup> Ridley, *A View*, p. 122n.

<sup>16</sup> Ridley, *A View*, pp. 51–52n, 191–192n; Prynne, *Canterburies doome*, pp. 126, 206, 218.

found occasion to controvert Robert Bellarmine, who claimed that these fasts had already existed during the time of the Apostles, evidence for which he found in the mention of a fast during Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27). Bellarmine erred, Gregory retorted. The Syriac paraphrase on the text stated explicitly that this fast was a Jewish, not a Christian, fast: 'But the great and learned Cardinall in his devotion to sacred Orders, tooke any opportunitie to make these Solemnities in every circumstance Apostolicall.' Gregory proceeded to praise the esteem early Christians accorded to these fasts, and how they came to be observed in the English Church under the name of Ember-days. Gregory cited the laws of King Canute on these observances—using Anglo-Saxon type—before concluding with a pious admonition: 'This was the Religion of our Ancestours; and if ignorance could admit so much devotion, how much more would bee expected from these knowing times?'<sup>17</sup>

Most of the detailed notes, however, reveal that Gregory had consciously engaged in a critical dialogue with Selden's *Historie of Tithes*. Commenting on Laud's role in discharging Selden in January 1635 from the obligation of re-applying for bail every Michaelmas and Hilary terms, Gerald Toomer conjectures that Selden entered into 'an informal agreement' with Laud, promising to publish his *Mare Clausum* if released from bail. Gregory's commissioned critique, I submit, may well have been conceived by Laud as an integral part of the arrangement—in all likelihood with Selden's prior knowledge. An enigmatic claim made in David Lloyd's biographical account of Gregory appears to hint at such a scenario. 'Great Selden', Lloyd recounted, 'confessed this Gentleman [Gregory] a confutation of his opprobrious Preface against the Clergy in his Book of *Tythes*, sending no less than eighty seven doubts, in several sorts of learning, to be resolved by him.'<sup>18</sup> No evidence exists to substantiate this assertion, but the rumour Lloyd related may suggest some discussion about tithes between Gregory and Selden—perhaps as Gregory composed his annotations. Certainly, as we shall see below, the two were already in correspondence by the time that Gregory's edition of Ridley was published. And if I am correct in assuming that Laud put Gregory to the task, an analogy seems justified: just as Selden submitted to 'publishing a book which presented a legal and historical justification for some aspects of Stuart policy', so Gregory submitted to confining himself to a civil, and strictly historical, rejoinder—in which Selden's name is conspicuously absent.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the historical focus was ap-

17 Ridley, *A View*, pp. 76–77n.

18 Lloyd, *Memoirs of the Lives*, p. 88.

19 G.J. Toomer, *John Selden. A Life in Scholarship*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2009), 1: 390–93. On the basis of an undated letter in which Gregory made it clear that Selden was in the habit of lending him books (Oxford, Bodleian, MS supra 108 fol. 74', Toomer has conjectured that

propriate. Selden pronounced in his preface that he had no intention of meddling with the divine right of tithes, a business he left to 'profest' divines. Instead, he concerned himself with what 'falls under Historie'. None of those who had written on the subject, Selden charged, had possessed 'boldnes enough to adventure' on history—owing to 'Ignorance or Negligence in talking of it'. Such a failure led them to self-deception, as well as deception of their readers, who 'give their Historicall faith captive to bare Names and common reputation'. Hence Gregory's strictly historical engagement with parts of Selden's book.<sup>20</sup>

Ridley devoted part III of his book to the issue of tithes. In the first chapter he discussed ecclesiastical jurisdiction, before turning to expound on 'the Care that Princes of this Realm have had for the due payment of Tythes unto the Church', beginning with King Athelstan (927–939 CE). Gregory sought to do better: he located the 'great pietie & Princely care' from an even earlier time, albeit without using the term 'tithes': the late seventh-century code of King Ine of Wessex, one decree of which promulgated the obligation to pay 'Church-secat' each St Martin's Day (11 November). Selden had referred to Ine's code only in a footnote, when explicating the meaning of 'Cyrycsecat' mentioned in an act of the Synod held by King Edmund in London (944 CE). The term, Selden argued, simply referred to 'Church-rent of Corn, or the first fruit of Corn' paid annually on St Martin's Day. Gregory attempted to broaden the term, arguing that it 'hath bin diversly interpreted'. Fleta, for example, had taken it to mean 'church seed', whereas an 'old Lawyer' cited by William Lambarde interpreted it as 'Church-shot, or Church due'. However we read the term, Gregory continued, 'there will bee no great injurie done to the sense'; but since it could imply other commodities besides corn, 'church due' might be best.<sup>21</sup>

A probe of King Athelstan's law followed. The king, Selden stated, had promulgated c. 930 'a generall Law from prediall and mixt Tithes', a law he cited in the original Anglo-Saxon, along with an 'ancient' Latin translation. Selden insisted, however, that 'the example of *Jacob*, with a Text or two out of the holy Writ and *S. Augustin*' mentioned in the text, was added simply in order 'to move devotion'. Again, Gregory sought to go deeper and broader. He cited the Anglo-Saxon text more fully, adding an English translation, and paid closer attention to the edifying conclusion, which he glossed differently:

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Selden may have furnished Gregory with some of the material for his notes (private communication).

20 John Selden, *The Historie of Tithes* (London, 1618), pp. III–IV.

21 Ridley, *A View*, p. 138n; Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 215–16.

Thus the religious Prince goes on, and earnestly pursues the argument in the Rhetorick of those times, seeming to intimate to his people, that though no humane Law had interposed it selfe, yet the divine equitie of this cause, might be eminently enforced out of sacred Writ.<sup>22</sup>

Turning to King Edmund's Synod, Gregory furnished the original text with an English translation—Selden, as usual, had used an old Latin translation—before zooming in on Selden's explication of 'Almes-Money' mentioned in the act. The term, Selden wrote, signified 'the *Peter*-pence, due yearly at the first of August', instituted either by King Ine or King Athelulph. Gregory embellished: it was called 'Peterpence, for when *Ina* ... went in pilgrimage to *Rome*, he made it a Law to his Subjects, that every house should pay a yearely pennie to the Pope, & this was to be tendred at S. *Peters* tyde, as appeareth by Edgars Law num. 4', as well as in the laws of Canute and Edward the Confessor.<sup>23</sup> Gregory also accentuated the significance of 'the curse of Excommunication here annexed by the Law to this Sacriledge of with-holding the Tenth', finding parallels in a fifteenth-century Oxford Synod that branded church robbers with 'Anathema'. In contrast, Gregory had little to say on related legislations. He offered a brief excerpt from King Edgar's laws—which Selden had cited more fully—and a fuller citation of King Canute's law, again in the original and in English translation.<sup>24</sup>

A subsequent set of notes pertained to the origin of parishes, a topic to which Selden had devoted considerable space. In order to adjudicate the matter of appropriations, Selden explained, 'it is first necessarie, to know so much of the nature of Parish Churches in those times, as without which the Appropriations then used cannot be understood'—or, as Gregory put it, in order to make 'the course of Antiquitie runne cleere'.<sup>25</sup> To Gregory's understanding, the ancient Roman popes 'gave example to others in this matter ... for it was recorded in the Pontifical of Damasus (as some would have it)'. This equivocation clearly attests to his cognizance of Selden's rejection of the documents associated with Damasus as forgeries—notwithstanding Cesare Baronio's ac-

22 Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 213–14; Ridley, *A View*, pp. 138–139n.

23 Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 216–17; Ridley, *A View*, p. 139n. Turner used the Lombardian pica Anglo-Saxon types that hitherto had been employed exclusively by London printers. It is difficult to determine whether the types were shipped to Oxford or whether the pages containing Anglo-Saxon were printed in London. See P.J. Lucas, 'Parker, Lambarde, and the Provision of Special Sorts for Printing Anglo-Saxon in the Sixteenth Century', *Journal of the Printing Historical Society*, 28 (1999), 41–69.

24 Ridley, *A View*, pp. 139–40; Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 216–20, 223–4.

25 Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, p. 80; Ridley, *A View*, p. 152n.

ceptance of them as genuine.<sup>26</sup> Be this as it may, Gregory continued, he had found references to the division of Rome into parishes (*tituli*) by Pope Evaristus I (99–105 CE) in Anastasius Bibliothecarius, and *titulus*, he asserted, ‘might bee taken for *paroecia*’. For evidence, Gregory referred the reader to Baronio’s *Annales* (under the year 112 CE). By the third century, Gregory continued, the Roman practice had extended to other provinces, as could be surmised from a letter of Pope Dionysius I (259–268 CE) to the bishop of Córdoba, which urged the latter to propagate the practice in his province. Another prevarication followed: ‘If these things bee answerable, as they are generally received by the Romish Antiquaries.’ This hedging was necessary because Selden had doubted both the authenticity of the letter and its purported significance. If the letter was fictitious, Selden wrote, ‘then our Canonists doe ill to use it at all, if not, then plainly they abuse it, where they pretend in it an originall of such kind of Parishes as since for the most part have had their beginning from lay-foundations.’<sup>27</sup>

Ridley had ascribed the beginning of parishes in England to Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury (d. 653 CE, not in 693 as Ridley wrote), and Gregory concurred, citing William Camden’s *Britannia* as evidence. Still, Gregory added, in apparent agreement with Selden, ‘heed must be taken to the Equivocation of the word Parish; for it hath not always had one and the same acception.’<sup>28</sup> Such outward consensus led Gregory to expound more fully than Selden on the distribution of monies contributed by parishioners. Selden had described the quadripartite division of the ‘common Treasury’ in the Roman diocese: one part for the maintenance of the ministers; another for the relief of the poor; a third for parishioners for church repair; and a fourth to the bishop. However, Selden qualified, a tripartite system had prevailed elsewhere, and other differences existed as well. Selden had also contended that such a practice persisted until the year 500 CE, and it is to this system that Pope Dionysius referred c. 260—‘if at least that Epistle be not a fiction.’<sup>29</sup> Gregory elaborated on the manner in which tithes had been paid directly to the bishop, and how the bishop then distributed the levies according to the quadripartite system described by Selden. Agreeing again with Selden, Gregory observed that such a structure had prevailed ‘especially’ in the Romish Church, as ‘plainely appeareth’ in a letter sent by Pope Gregory I to Augustine, archbishop of Canterbury—a letter cited by Selden to the same effect. Nonetheless, Gregory added, a *chorepisco-*

26 Ridley, *A View*, p. 152n; Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 43–4

27 Ridley, *A View*, pp. 152–3; Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, p. 82.

28 Ridley, *A View*, pp. 152, 153n; William Camden, *Britain* (London, 1637), p. 160.

29 Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 81–2.

*pus* (archpriest) had been entrusted with the collection of such dues, made clear by the Arabic canons of the Council of Nicaea. These, 'together with other Oecumenicall Councils, and those Canons which are called the Apostles, and some history of the primitive times, out of Clement &c wee enjoy and esteeme as a most peculiar monument transported hither out of the Easterne world, and placed in our publick Librarie, by the bountie of ... Sir *Thomas Roe*'. Gregory cited the text in Hebrew characters, owing to 'our great want of Arabick Characters'.<sup>30</sup>

Having cited canon 58 of the Arabic text—which, Gregory explained, corresponded to canon 54 in the Latin version published in Severin Binius's edition—he felt compelled to consider the authenticity of these canons. It had been argued, Gregory conceded, that the canons of Nicaea 'are supposititious; [he] only know that they may bee so, not that they are'. Nevertheless, though it might be 'dull' to consider 'obtruded' material, 'yet the rejection of ancient Authors and Councils should be warily concluded upon'. Gregory obviously wished the Arabic canons to be genuine, but ultimately he hedged. A common tradition had it that Athanasius had been obliged to request a copy of the canons of Nicaea from the pope, owing to the destruction of all copies in the Eastern parts by the Arians. Hence, Gregory reasoned, if the letters between Athanasius and Pope Mark were genuine, then the Arabic canons were 'the lesse to be suspected'. And while objections had been raised regarding the genuineness of these letters, such objections were grounded primarily on matters of chronology, 'and because such as these are subject to much hazard, therefore our confidence in beleiving may be arbitrarie, & at our own disposing'. Whatever the status of the canons of Nicaea, Gregory continued, clear evidence for the existence of a quadripartite division in the early church could be found in canon twenty-five of the Council of Antioch. The Arabic version of this canon, he noted, was more detailed than the Greek. In almost the same breath, he agreed with Selden that the practice had prevailed principally in the Roman church, while other provinces used the tripartite division. After elaborating on the matter, Gregory came full circle to jurisdiction:

If wee apply these decrees to the matter in hand wee may deduce something answerable to that which is inquired. Besides, Lay men were not to medle with the ordering of Tythe-payment, and yet in this division of

<sup>30</sup> Ridley, *A View*, pp. 153–41; Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, p. 253. Several years later Selden asked Brian Twyne to furnish him with transcriptions from the manuscript (Oxford, Bodleian, MS Roe 26), and Gregory assisted in the enterprise: Oxford, Bodleian, MSS Selden supra 109, fols 278a–c, and Selden supra 108, fol. 243<sup>r</sup>.

Parishes, a principall respect was had to the consideration of Tythes, and therefore it was, that Parishes were limited with such great care and curiositie

One of his frequent equivocations followed: 'At what time this last kinde of Parishes began else where, wee enquire not, when they began here at home, wee finde not, unlesse wee understand such as these in the Division of Honorius: however they must be in use before the dayes of Edgar, as it seemeth by the Saxon Lawes of that time.'<sup>31</sup>

The cornerstone of the exchange was the issue of whether Charles Martel (c. 688–741) had appropriated church tithes—a question that Richard Tillesley, one of Selden's most vociferous critics considered 'of so great consequence.'<sup>32</sup> Thomas Ridley set out to inquire how it was that while Tithes 'were never clogged with custome, prescription, or composition' under Roman Law, they became precisely so after Christianity was adopted as the official religion of the empire. Ridley considered the 'violent intrusion of Lay men' to be the chief cause for this change, in particular the infeudation of Charles Martel—which he dated, inaccurately, to around 650 CE. That Frankish warrior, Ridley charged, had refused to fight the Muslims threatening France unless the clergy 'would be content to resigne every man his Tythes into his hands, that thereby hee might reward the Souldiers'. The clergy acquiesced, on condition that the tithes would be restored after the war. Martel reneged on his promise, however, and tithes were not restored to the Church until the third Lateran Council, some 450 years later. According to legend, Martel was punished for his sins in the afterlife. In fact, it was claimed that Eucherius, bishop of Orléans, had experienced a vision in which he witnessed the torment of Martel in hell. On awakening, Eucherius contacted St Boniface, bishop of Mainz, and Fulard, abbot of Saint-Denis, urging them to inspect Martel's tomb and see whether his remains were still there. When the tomb was opened, the legend goes, a dragon sprang out, leaving behind a blackened interior, proof that the body had been dragged into hell. The legend gave rise to the charge that Martel had been damned for his crimes against the Church, especially for his appropriation of tithes.<sup>33</sup>

31 Ridley, *A View*, pp. 154–6n. Gregory generally followed Selden on this last issue: Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 256–62.

32 Richard Tillesley, *Animadversions upon Mr. Seldens History of Tythes and his Review Thereof*, 2nd ed. (London, 1621), p. 68.

33 Ridley, *A View*, pp. 164–72. For the legend, see Joannes Bollandus and Godefridus Henschenius, *Acta Sanctorum ... Februarii tomus tertius* (Paris and Rome, 1865), pp. 216–20.



Were the story true, Selden responded, it would have been 'faire proof' of the great antiquity of tithes. Nevertheless, he continued, though modern authors readily accept the account as genuine, no 'old author of credit' had ever accused Martel of meddling with tithes. The sole contemporary testimony on the matter came from St Boniface, who merely grumbled over Martel's rewarding his warriors with church properties. As for Eucherius's vision, Selden dismissed it as pure 'fiction', a 'hobgoblin storie'. He further controverted the very suggestion that an appropriation of tithes could have been Martel's 'chief sacriledge', for tithes 'were not so universally as yet annex to churches'. Besides, Selden queried, how could Eucherius request a search of Martel's tomb when the latter outlived him by several years? 'That's enough, & truth too, that Boniface brands [Martel] withall for his tyrannical spoiling the Church of her other possessions', Selden concluded; the legend of Eucherius 'is too full of falshoods to gain to itselfe any credit'. As for the 'Infeodations of Tithes' more generally, those who 'referre them to the time of Charles Martell, or any age neer him, are in grosse error'.<sup>34</sup>

After recapping Ridley's account, Gregory agreed with Selden that what 'is certaine and beleaved by all' is that Martel had been 'a great oppressour of the Church'—a fact Gregory further corroborated by citing Scipion Duplex's account of the order given by Martel's son, Pepin, to bury him 'with his face and belly downward, to expiate his Fathers transgressions'.<sup>35</sup> Yet, while Martel's 'Sacriledge in generall must be granted', Gregory continued, what about his defrauding the church of its tithes? Among the first to deny the story, Gregory noted, was Étienne Pasquier, 'a man, whom though wee forsake in this Particular, yet wee may safely commend for his varietie of learning otherwise'. In *Les recherches de la France*, Pasquier sought to rehabilitate Martel's reputation, and Gregory, I contend, targetted him in order to avoid criticizing Selden—who had relied heavily on Pasquier. Gregory found the French historian to be extremely prejudiced against 'the dignitie and Jurisdiction of the Clergie', and he believed that a proper response could be given to Pasquier's main objection: that no early French historian had ever charged Martel with infeudation of tithes.<sup>36</sup>

Pasquier argued that since Aimoin of Fleury (c. 960–c. 1010) made no mention of Martel's infeudation in his *Historia Francorum*, such an appropriation of tithes had never occurred. True, Gregory admitted, Aimoin did not mention

34 Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 50–53, 112. Selden was wrong; Eucherius died in 743, two years after Martel.

35 Scipion Duplex, *Histoire generale de France*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1634–1636), 1: 265.

36 Ridley, *A View*, p. 165n.

infeudation, but nor did he disclose any other sacrileges perpetrated by Martel—including those admitted by Pasquier himself. One ought to remember, Gregory explained (wrongly), that Aimoin wrote during the reign of ‘Charles the Great’, and he received his information from the king’s chaplain. This was ‘too neere the time of *Martel* for a true Historian’, he insisted, and for good reason. If a king proves to be bad, ‘no Subject may dare to write what such a Sovereaign could commit’. Rather, the Historian ‘must dissemble or defend it’. And as the chaplain is a dependent of the emperor, he ‘must not tell such tales of his Grandfather’. Consequently, Aimoin showered superlatives on Martel, going so far as to liken the taking of Avignon (737 CE) to Joshua’s capture of Jericho. Such a line of argument, however, could jeopardize the historian’s task. Given that contemporary narrators routinely glossed over shameful deeds, how could subsequent historians ‘deduce’ events, ‘whereof the ancient had made no mention of’? The reply may be, Gregory suggests, ‘that though this were not publickly recorded by the old Writers ... yet it might remaine in the Notes of private men, and being delivered from hand to hand, might be reserved for such a time as could indure the relation’.<sup>37</sup>

A case in point was the account furnished by St Boniface, Martel’s contemporary. Perhaps, Gregory suggested, he ‘could have said more than hee did, if that be not enough which hee hath said, that this *Charles was Ecclesiasticarum pecuniarum in proprios usus commutator*’. Indeed, Gregory continued, Boniface’s remark

seemeth to have beene no otherwise publickly knowne than in an Epistle of his to *Ethelbald*, one of our *Mercian* Kings, a fragment whereof is inserted into the *Storie* of this *Ethelbald* by *William of Malmsebury*; but in other Copies of this Epistle, the clause which concernes Martel it occurs not.

Gregory pointed out that in Nicholas Serarius’s edition of *Epistolae S. Bonifatii martyris* (Mainz, 1605), the epistle to King Ethelbald was printed without the derogatory mention of Martel: ‘And the truth must be, that if *Boniface* have any such thing to say of Charles, he must send it far enough, for it might not be told at home.’ Indeed, even Paulus Aemilius Veronensis in his *De rebus gestis Francorum* could only relate this ‘timorously’. According to Aemilius, some had reported that Martel had transcended the renown of all captains who preceded him; others intimated that he had ‘given over the divine right of Tythes to his militarie men’. But since Aemilius described the former informants as ‘summi

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 166n.

viri', while the latter were now referred to as 'Sancti viri'; Gregory felt it proper to conclude: 'the first sort may, but the latter ought to be beleaved'.<sup>38</sup>

Gregory also criticized Pasquier on another matter. The French historian had related that the *Magdeburg Centuries* referred him to a canon of a council held under Carloman in the year 742, which stated: 'Decimas occupatas à prophanis restituimus'—which, if true, Gregory added, Pasquier 'granteth all, for then, saith he, "il n'y auroit pas grande difficulté pour ceste opinion."' Pasquier averred that he could find neither the synod nor the specific canon in any of the four-volume edition of church councils. Pasquier deceived himself, Gregory rebutted; he simply searched for the words cited by the Magdeburg historians, but rather than furnishing a precise citation, they paraphrased—having derived the information from Johann Aventine's *Annalium Boiorum libri VII* rather than from the council itself. And since Pasquier read 'nothing but the Titles, [he] came away with a *Non inventus est*'. Therefore, Gregory continued, 'the Councell is extant'; and though the canon in question is not cited 'in the same words, and though it were not set downe in the same sence (which is the most that can be said) yet it is plainly expres'd by Aventine *Decimas, bona ecclesiastica, occupata à prophanis restituimus*'. Had Aventine been deceived, Gregory proceeded, seemingly undercutting the force of his argument, 'it needed not be for want of judgement, and it could not be for want of care', in view of the prodigious effort he had made to collect the material. And if, despite 'all this care, Aventine should not finde out the true copies, or not be able to distinguish them from the false, it is altogether incredible'. Nevertheless, Gregory concluded, 'notwithstanding what [Pasquier] hath said, it may seeme very reasonable that we beleeve Charles Martel to be the Author of the forenamed Infaedations, and that this is not without probabilitie, [Pasquier] himselfe confesseth, where he saith: A la verité ceux qui ont esté de cest advis ne sont denuez de bien grand pretexte.'<sup>39</sup>

Selden did not deny the existence of the council but only the authenticity of the wording of the canon in question: 'Of no lesse falshood or upon other ground, then this fiction of *Martell*, is their relation which attribute to that Synod under *Caroloman*, these words, *Decimas occupatas a prophanis restituimus*. Neither course nor any storie of the time can justifie it.' Gregory ignored Selden's statement, but immediately after disposing of Pasquier he cited Selden approvingly on a related issue: 'However if these Infeudations had not their originall from Charles (as they seeme to have had) yet 'tis impossible they

38 Ibid., pp. 166–167n; Paulus Aemilius, *De rebus gestis Francorum libri X* (Paris, 1576), fol. 30<sup>v</sup>.

39 Ridley, *A View*, p. 169n; Étienne Pasquier, *Les recherches de la France* (Paris, 1633), pp. 309–10; Johann Aventine, *Annalium Boiorum libri VII* (Basel, 1580), p. 216.

should begin where [Pasquier] hath appointed, as it is observed by a most learned Writer of our owne, Cap. 6. of his Hist. of tythes, page 112.<sup>40</sup> Nor did Gregory mention Selden's more detailed discussion of the matter in the latter's *Review*. There, Selden paid closer attention to the Council of Ratisbon (742) and to the passage Aventin, as well as the historian Melchior Goldast, had cited. The latter, Selden pointed out, had subsequently found a better copy of the document, where the canon in question read: '*Fraudatas pecunias, Ecclesiarum Ecclesiis restituimus.*' Some copies, Selden added, included '*fundatas*, but none, of any autoritie, *Decimas. Pecunia* being only their wealth or estate in Lands.' Selden admitted that *pecunia* could denote 'offerings of fruits and corn, and so might be drawn to denote Tithes offered, but that signification was of rare use, and only among the Gentiles'. Selden concluded:

When I see any testimonie neer *Martells* time that so may justifie the receivd tale of his prophaning of Tithes as I may change my mind. But seeing so much of his sacrileges left in the storie of neer his age, and that not a syllable touching such Tithes as we here enquire after, nor anything els that hath reference to the common paiment of them, is found in the Laws made under him, I still remain confident in what I have admonished; and I think so will every man els that hath an impartiall eie of judgment.<sup>41</sup>

Gregory persisted in his historiographical inquiries by contrasting Pasquier with two eminent Frenchmen, 'equal' to Pasquier in learning, but 'different from him in this opinion': Jean Filesac, 'a most learned Divine of *Paris*'—whom Selden also termed 'learned'<sup>42</sup>—and the jurist Pierre Grégoire. The latter, Gregory pointed out, 'beleevingly' narrated the account regarding Martel's usurpation of tithes, as well as accepting the story of Eucherius's vision. For his part, Filesac conferred on Martel a 'preheminance' among contemporary 'Church-robbers'. He also cited an ancient manuscript attesting to Martel's appropriation of tithes, 'and having considered both of the Storie and the vision, [Filesac] giveth this approbation'.<sup>43</sup>

At this point, Gregory inserted a long and curious digression, indicative of his strong belief in miracles—evident elsewhere in his writings. 'It was strange indeede', he wrote, 'that those inconceivable tortures of the damned could be made fantastically, and that which cannot be feined should be seene in a vision;

<sup>40</sup> Ridley, *A View*, p. 169n; Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 53, 112.

<sup>41</sup> Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, p. 466

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.

<sup>43</sup> Ridley, *A View*, p. 170n; Pierre Grégoire, *Syntagma juris universi* (Frankfurt, 1611), p. 44; Jean Filesac *Veteris ecclesiae Gallicanae querela* (Paris, 1603), pp. 8–9.

yet we may not thinke these latter times so incapable of a wonder, as not to admit of somthing that is strange.' To substantiate his claim, Gregory invoked the new star that appeared in 1572. It was so bright, Gregory exclaimed, that 'if the whole earth had spent it selfe into one exhalation, it would have come farre short of making up so vast a body, as this Starre must be, which exceeded those of the greatest magnitude'. And as long as the star remained visible, no one could claim 'that the world wanted a wonder'. Therefore, if we permit such wonders in the heavens, 'why should we exclude the inferiour world'? We need not believe in the legend of a crow mourning over the body of St Vincent of Saragossa nor that St Denis picked up his decapitated head and walked away. Nonetheless, 'that the Bloud of Saints is so precious in the eyes of God, that a Martyr indeed, seldome goeth off without a miracle'. Gregory assented to a growing Protestant consensus regarding miracles to have been 'most frequent in the primitive times'; yet he feared that if no story is allowed to pass muster unless it involves Christ or the apostles, 'all Stories would be legends, & almost every discourse too strange to be true'. Gregory wished to believe that wonders might occur: 'for if God did not sometimes interrupt the common course, wee should dote, upon the ordinarie meanes, and begin to think, that Nature had no supreamer cause than it selfe'. Consequently, if at least certain elements of Eucherius's vision were not admitted, 'then what shall be thought of all those ancient testimonies of grave and learned men, who are engaged to make this good?'<sup>44</sup>

Gregory had in mind the historian Claude Fauchet, who had accepted as genuine the narrative contained in a letter composed by Hincmar, bishop of Rheims—in the name of the bishops who gathered for the Synod of Quierzy (858) and dispatched to Emperor Louis II, who had just invaded France. Inter alia, the letter detailed the damnation of Martel and Eucherius's vision, which the attending bishops confirmed *viva voce*—so 'that the Emperor might make no doubt' of the relation, Gregory added. He referred the reader to Baronio, who had published the letter as well as to Gratian and to the *Chronicle* of Marianus Scotus.<sup>45</sup> Once again, Gregory equivocated by adding two sceptical notes. First, he cited the 'sober demmure' with which Nicolas Gilles related the story: 'what to thinke of this, I cannot tell, God he knoweth'. To which Gregory added his own closing remark: 'this onely may briefly and confidently bee add-

44 Ridley, *A View*, 170–71n; Claude Fauchet, *Les Antiquitez et histoires Gauloises et Françaises* (Geneva, 1611), p. 392.

45 Ridley, *A View*, pp. 170–71n; Cesare Baronio, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1593–1607), 10: 154. Baronio had also recounted the story under the year 741, but he thought it fabulous, not least because he believed that Martel died several years after Eucherius: *ibid.*, 9: 138.

ed, That as he came improperly into the world, so he went unusually out; for he was borne a Bastard, and died miserably'.<sup>46</sup>

The remaining notes offered a nuanced, and historical, defence of the rights of the Anglican church more generally. Ridley had noted how 'refractory persons' could only be forced to restore church properties 'under the paine of damnation'. Gregory launched an extensive excursus on the subject, enumerating the various 'anathemae' that were laid on those guilty of such sacrilege. In particular, he reprinted, in black letters, 'The general sentence, or curse; used to be read to the people four times in the year', which Wynkyn de Worde printed in 1532. This 'General Curse', Gregory glossed, was intended not 'to fright any man into devotion with this (black Sentence) or to propose such distempered pietie for an example', only to highlight 'how horrible a crime it was in our Forefathers account to rob the Church in the least particular. And indeed they conceived no more hope of a man that died under this *Damnorum Theta*, than of him that dyed in a mortall sinne.' Other sources, like the 'Canterbury Booke', had accentuated the message: 'Thus we see what furies followed this Sacrilege in the opinion of our Forefathers, who were so confident, that a Church-robber could not escape the Judgement of God, that they delivered him over to Satan, or as they say, curfed him with the *More*, and with the *Lesse Curse*, with Bell, Booke, and Candle'. As a conclusion, Gregory felt it proper to invoke the prophet Muhammad himself:

Farre be it ever from us to thinke otherwise than divinely of these our most Religious Princes, by whose gracious protection the Church hath bin of late so miraculously blest. As for others among us, they may apply this to themselves as they shall be troubled with cause and occasion. The great Impostor in his *Alcoran*, though he cozened all the world besides, yet he would not defraud the Church.<sup>47</sup>

Other notes include a historical narrative of the evolution of the sacrament of baptism in in the ancient Church, from when the rite was performed in rivers and fountains until the foundation of baptismal churches—an account that occasioned a digression on the injunction to pay tithes to these churches. Gregory then cited the Law of King Canute (1016) on the penalty awaiting those who dared to break the peace of the Church—in the original and in English

<sup>46</sup> Ridley, *A View*, p. 171n.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172–175n. Gregory added: 'hee that reades *Roberts* [of Ketton] Translation, must not alwayes thinke he reads the *Alcoran*. The Prophets owne text is in in our manuscript.'

translation—again digressing for the sake of citing the same code on the matter of tithes owed to churches.<sup>48</sup>

Gregory also embarked on a passionate defence of old abbeys and monasteries which, he maintained, were originally established 'onely for pietie, and for such a practise thereof which the soule might freely enjoy, while it was so set at libertie from the inquietude and avocations of the over-active world'. To these institutions learned Fathers of the Church had retired in order to contemplate and to write. Gregory cited a decree from Canute's Law which, he believed, attested to the 'strict devotion and unblameable carriage [that] the ancient Princes of this Land have expected from their holy men of this kinde'. Having now cited the decree, Gregory was emboldened to return to the Arabic canon of the Council of Nicaea in order to invoke the canon which, he believed, best illustrated 'what great strictnesse and severitie of life was required of these holy Orders'. Gregory was convinced that the 'great estimation' accorded to holy men of old had 'enforced such an immoderate charitie in deuout minds, that they obtained most especiall Priviledges & Exemptions, and no man thought anything too good or too much to bestow upon a Monasterie'. Unfortunately, two evils plagued the fortunes of those monasteries, Gregory elucidated. First, the 'luxuriant demeanour of these Religious Orders, degenerating from their old sanctimonie', and, second, the growing usage of laws of mortmain. Such laws may have been necessary in the past, Gregory reflected, but 'certaine it is, the present needeth them not; for in these dayes few men are so rash handed, as to give too much to the Church: And that which was heretofore said of those things that were given, that they were in a *Dead Hand*, may now more justly be said of those that are taken away.'<sup>49</sup>

The final, and lengthiest, note expanded on several issues Gregory had touched on previously—offering insights into his own religious beliefs. The note commenced with an examination, discussed above, of the relations between bishop and patron, where Gregory insisted that insofar as the rights of the Church were concerned, nothing could be done 'without the Bishops jurisdiction'. Just as the Israelites brought the lamb to the Tabernacle, but it was the priest who 'made it an Offering and an Attonement', so a patron might choose a place, 'but till the Prelate came and sanctified the ground, it might as well be a *Denne of Theeves as a house of prayer*'. Passionate about the subject, Gregory reiterated the metaphor in several ways, including an invocation of the legal code promulgated by the 'devout & learned' King Alfred, as evidence that 'the priviledge of a new Church followed not the building but the consecration of

48 Ibid., pp. 176–178n.

49 Ibid., pp. 183–185n.

it'.<sup>50</sup> Gregory further sought to substantiate the antiquity of the diocesan's primacy by reference to the Apostolic Canons. Having cited two of them, however, Gregory felt compelled to justify his appeal to a document whose authenticity had been doubted—which thus might render his use of them 'to little purpose':

I have alwaies marvelled who that should be that durst be so bold, as to fasten so many forged precepts upon the Apostles; and much more, that whosoever he were, hee could be so fortunate in his fraud, as not to be discovered rather in the next Age, than in those later times which saw the former at a distance, & may be thought to know but a little of that which was then done. True it is, that some of these Canons may seeme to argue, neither the Spirit, nor Style of that Ages in which they pretend to have been brought forth: and yet of others we are bound to thinke more soberly.

Such a defence was partly grounded on Gregory's belief that the Arabic version of these canons conferred some credit on them. But even if not, he added, the canons of the Council of Antioch (341 CE), the canons of the Synod of Gangra (340 CE), as well as subsequent testimonies, corroborated the diocesan's prerogative in the dispensation of Church goods and in the endowment of churches and monasteries.<sup>51</sup>

Having established to his own satisfaction the preeminence of diocesans in matters pertaining to the 'Erection & Endowment of a Church or Monasterie', Gregory proceeded to ascertain their right of 'Filling' religious houses. This was an ancient right, Gregory noted, enforced by several councils—including the fourteenth canon of the Council of Nicaea. Those who found the Latin translation of this canon unsatisfactory, he added, might well wish to consult the Arabic version—which he promised to 'shortly provide', unless 'prevented by those that are better able, or forced to forbear for want of Characters'. The rights of bishops ought to be acknowledged 'even now', Gregory went on, 'without injurie to the Statutes of Dissolution' under Henry VIII. True, in earlier centuries bishops had consented to share the prerogative of presentation with laymen, owing to contemporary exigencies and the desire to encourage

50 Ibid., pp. 192–193n.

51 Ibid., p. 194n. In his review of the *History of Tithes*, Selden argued forcefully against the genuineness of the Apostolic Constitutions, a critique that drew the ire of King James I. In *De iure naturali*, however, Selden described the canon as 'old' and 'weighty', an 'ancient canon (however falsely attributed to the Apostles)'. Selden, *Historie of Tithes*, pp. 462–4; Toomer, *John Selden*, 1: 271, 300; 2: 497 n. 45.



patrons. Nevertheless, such a partnership was established with the understanding that it should 'be necessarie for the Patron to have recourse to the Bishop, that hee might qualifie his Clerke for the Rectorie by ordination, and that it should be lawfull for the Bishop to devest the Patron of this Right according as hee should be moved by such causes as were found to be of a considerable importance'. Alas, lay patrons had often 'abused their libertie', and here Gregory enumerated a litany of such infractions and the manner in which various councils had addressed them—most notably the third Lateran Council, 'where the authoritie and consent of the Bishop is strongly reinforced'. The decree of that council, Gregory continued, 'was accepted and ratified here at home' by the Synod of Westminster (1200), 'where every man is expressly forbidden ... according to the tenor of the Lateran Council, to receive any Tythes or Ecclefiasticall livings from a Lay-mans hand, otherwise than by Episcopall authoritie'.<sup>52</sup> With this recourse to a previous discussion the note ended, and no additional annotations appear in the remaining seventy-eight pages of the book.

Such an ambiguous, and occasionally feeble, set of notes, might be interpreted as indicating incompetence rather than design. Additional evidence, however, appears to come down on the side of design. First, Gregory took some steps to conceal his identity, at least in part. The title-page identifies the editor simply as 'I.G. Mr of Arts'; so, too, the preface to the reader is also signed 'I.G.' Nor does the book include a dedication—save for Ridley's original address to James I. Second, as set out above, Selden virtually escapes mention, even though many of the annotations engaged expressly with the *Historie of Tithes*. Significantly, the first surviving letter between Gregory and Selden is dated 27 January 1633/4, three or four weeks after the book's publication, and its content makes clear that the two had already been in contact. Does it not stand to reason that Selden was aware of Gregory's editorial work when the exchange commenced? As I have suggested above, Selden may have well realized that Gregory was complying reluctantly with a task put to him—an unavoidable nuisance, so to speak, to ensure Selden's 'rehabilitation'. As it turned out, not only was Selden released, but henceforth Laud claimed him as a friend—a reversal which was noticed. On the eve of King Charles I's visit to Oxford in August 1636, a local preacher 'Rayld much' against the *Historie of Tithes*, which caused a visiting courtier to express hope that when Laud got wind of it, the preacher might 'receave some repriment'.<sup>53</sup>

52 Ridley, *A View*, pp. 195–199n.

53 A.J. Taylor, 'The Royal Visit to Oxford In 1636. A Contemporary Narrative', *Oxoniensia*, 1 (1936), 151–8, at 154–5. For Selden's relations with Laud, see Toomer, *John Selden*, 1: 391–2.

Equally suggestive of design is Gregory's querying Selden in the above mentioned letter on a related project. Oxford printers, Gregory wrote, 'are about to reprint D<sup>r</sup> Cowells Interpreter, but they are stayed as yet'. John Cowell's book, too, was first published in 1607, and it caused even greater uproar than Ridley's book—to the extent that in 1611 it was publicly burnt by the public hanger. Gregory does not appear to have been directly involved with this project, but, perhaps at the behest of those aware of his exchange with Selden, he beseeched the latter 'to certifie [him] what is soe dangerous in that booke as to hinder y<sup>e</sup> Reprinting'. Conjecturing that the problem might lie with Cowell's definitions of such terms as 'prerogative', 'praemunire' and 'High Steward', Gregory wished Selden might furnish 'some direction in this whether it bee necessarie y<sup>t</sup> these or any other should bee left out'. 'Noe Man can tell better than y<sup>r</sup> selfe & let y<sup>r</sup> advice bee what it will it shall bee depended upon', Gregory stressed, 'if they must bee left out, they shall if they may bee other wise qualified y<sup>t</sup> would bee better.'<sup>54</sup>

We do not know if Selden responded, but the Oxford press never reissued Cowell's book. Three years later, however, a second edition of *The Interpreter* was published in London, and Laud was suspected of masterminding it. It was fortuitous that, for some reason, Cowell had neglected to identify the dedicatee of his book with precision. The 'Lord Archbishop of Canterbury ... and one of his Majesties most Honourable Privie Councell' applied equally well to the intended dedicatee, Richard Bancroft, as it did to William Laud. So much so, that in the first day of his trial (12 March 1643/4), the archbishop had been charged with arranging the publication, a charge that Laud forcefully denied. Be that as it may, perhaps the strongest indication of Gregory's distaste for his forced labour can be gleaned from the publication in 1639 of the third edition of Ridley's book. It carried the name of a London publisher—though it may well have been printed in Oxford—and Gregory clearly disavowed his contribution. His initials were removed from the title-page; his preface was deleted; and, most significantly, all the notes controverting Selden's *Historie of Tithes* were removed.

All this is not to say that Gregory was not a true member of Laud's 'High Church'. In addition to condoning the rites and practices of the Anglican church, Gregory also shared the Laudian prioritization of ritual and prayer over preaching. Indeed, the only time he controverted the author whom he had annotated was on this issue. According to Ridley, 'albeit Prayer bee a necessarie peece of Gods service, and so necessary, that the Soule of man is, as it were, dead without it, yet is it not equall to the dignitie of Preaching, which

54 Bodleian Library, MS Selden supra 108, fol. 52<sup>r</sup>.

God hath ordained to bee the onely meanes to come to Salvation by'. Gregory begged to differ. Preaching was necessary when addressing pagan audiences—just as missionaries in his time were doing. Yet, even in primitive times, which ostensibly 'had most cause to call for Preaching', this 'duty' was evidently 'of rarer exercise, & less solemnity than that of Prayer'. Whenever preaching was held high, it was 'much beholden to Prayer', as was made clear by St Chrysostom and Basil of Seleucia, as well as by St Ignatius and Christ himself. In fact, Moses Maimonides, 'that profound Doctor of the *Jewes*', named prayers and invocations as 'nearer to (Gods) first intention', themselves necessary 'in all times, in all places, and for every man'. Not that Gregory wished to detract from preaching, 'but considering our selves to live under a State so maturely composed, and so thoroughly advis'd and settled in the Faith, it will be expected, that we should so farre moderate our opinion of Preaching, as that our magnifying thereof, may no way tend to the discredit or disadvantage of most necessarie Prayer'.<sup>55</sup>

A fuller discussion of Gregory's religious sentiments is beyond the scope of this article. As for the partiality Gregory exhibited towards Selden, it brings to mind the narrative of the Book of Numbers concerning the design of Balak, king of Moab, to engage the seer Balaam in order to curse the approaching Israelites. The design miscarried when Balaam ended up blessing them instead. The commissioning of John Gregory to rebut John Selden's *History of Tithes* may not have backfired so spectacularly, but it might be said of him, too: בא לקלל ונמצא מברך ('he came to curse but was found blessing').

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55 Ridley, *A View*, 189n.

## Ravius in the East

*Gerald J. Toomer*

A fundamental period in the career of Christianus Ravius<sup>1</sup> (1613–1677), noted as a scholar of Arabic and other Oriental languages, was the two years he spent in Constantinople and other parts of the Ottoman dominions. During this time, he not only improved his linguistic skills, but especially exploited the opportunities to acquire manuscripts in Arabic and other Oriental languages, which were an essential resource for his later publications. In undertaking this Eastern journey, and in collecting manuscripts, he was following (undoubtedly consciously) the example of the two finest Arabic scholars of seventeenth-century Europe, Jacobus Golius and Edward Pococke, with both of whom he was in close contact at different times. After completing his early education at Berlin and Wittenberg, Ravius embarked on his *Bildungsreise* in 1636. He studied Arabic at Leiden with Golius for some months in 1638 and also became friendly with the Oriental scholar Louis de Dieu and with Gerardus Joannes Vossius in Amsterdam. While in Holland he obtained from the States-General a letter of recommendation to Cornelius Haga, their ambassador to the Ottoman Porte,<sup>2</sup> obviously with the intention of travelling to Constantinople. However, he first went to England,<sup>3</sup> whence he applied to Archbishop James Ussher

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- 1 For the life and works of Ravius (Christian Raue), the best account is still that of J. Moller, *Cimbria Literata* II (Copenhagen, 1744), pp. 680–88, corrected and supplemented by G.J. Toomer, 'Ravis, Christian', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 60 vols. (Oxford, 2004), 46: 135–6. A source of particular value is the published oration delivered on 1 July 1677 by Marcus Rhode at Ravius's funeral. Hitherto this was known only by the quotations from it in Moller and in J.C. Becmann, *Notitia Universitatis Francofurtanae* (Frankfurt a. d. Oder, 1707), pp. 267–70. Recently, however, I have acquired a reproduction of the original from the copy (shelfmark 548305) in the collection of 'Leichenpredigten' in the University Library at Wrocław (I am grateful to A. Ben-Tov and to the Library of Marburg University, which has microfilms of the whole collection, for help in this). I refer to this publication as *Funeral Programme*.
  - 2 *Bronnen tot de Geschiedenis van den Levantschen Handel, Eerste Deel 1590–1660*, ed. K. Heeringa ('s-Gravenhage, 1910), p. 413, n. 2.
  - 3 According to the *Funeral Programme* (sig. [A4r], cf. Moller, *Cimbria Literata*, p. 681), his intention was to visit Pococke, but this is unlikely, since the latter had been in Constantinople for more than a year. More plausible is the reason that Ravius himself gave (letter to G.J. Vossius, see G.J. Toomer 'A Sidelight on Grotius in Paris', *Grotiana*, 32 (2011), 64–81; 75), that he intended to travel with the newly appointed English ambassador to the Porte, Sir Sackville Crowe, who however had already left.

(in Ireland) for assistance, enclosing recommendations from Vossius and de Dieu, and was eventually promised an annual subsidy of £24 while he was in the East.<sup>4</sup> Instead of going directly to Constantinople, he went to Paris, supposedly so that he might travel in the train of the French ambassador to the Porte, Jean de la Haye, Sieur de Vantelec.<sup>5</sup> There he made the acquaintance of Hugo Grotius, who recommended him, not only to the ambassador, but also to Cardinal Richelieu.

Leaving Marseille by ship mid-June 1639, Ravius arrived in Constantinople about the beginning of July.<sup>6</sup> This passage was astonishingly quick, but it seems that he did not travel out with the French Ambassador, despite having been recommended to him by Grotius. If he had, it is unlikely that he would have reached Constantinople in the parlous state described by an eyewitness, Edward Pococke, in a letter to William Laud:

He came thither, without either Clothes befitting him (of which he said he had been robbed in France) or Money, or Letters of Credit, to any Merchant. He had Letters of Recommendation from some of the States to the Dutch Ambassador, who was departed before his Arrival. Sir Sackvil Crow, the English Ambassador, finding that he brought the Archbishop's Recommendation, generously took him into his House and Protection, and gave him all due Furtherance; requiring of him that, if Occasion so present itself, England may enjoy the Benefit of what Time he shall here employ, in the Study of the Eastern Tongues. His Desire, Mr. Pocock adds, seems to be, to be employed in setting forth Books in the Arabick Language, and to be Overseer of the Press in that Kind, for which he would be very fitting,<sup>7</sup>

The 'Archbishop' whose recommendation Ravius was carrying was thought by Twells to be Laud, and indeed he informs us that G.J. Vossius had recom-

4 *The Correspondence of James Ussher 1600–1656*, ed. E. Boran, 3 vols. (Dublin, 2015), 2: 772–3 (no. 453) and 802–3 (no. 466).

5 For this and Ravius's dealings with Grotius, see Toomer, 'A Sidelight on Grotius in Paris', pp. 64–81.

6 The approximate chronology is given by Ravius's letter to G.J. Vossius of 13 April 1640 (*Doctissimi clarissimique Gerardi Joannis Vossii et ad eum virorum eruditione celeberrimorum epistolæ ...*, ed. Paulus Colomesius, part 2 (London, 1693), p. 195 (no. 295), where he says that he has been in Constantinople almost ten months, combined with the statement in his *A Discourse of the Orientall Tongues* (London, 1649), p. 69, that 'I my selfe came in a fortnight from Marseil to Constantinople'.

7 Leonard Twells, 'The Life of the Reverend and Most Learned Dr. Edward Pocock', in his edition of *The Theological Works of the Learned Dr. Pocock*, 2 vols. (London, 1740), 1: 15.

mended Ravius to Pococke and requested Laud to do the same, 'which he did accordingly',<sup>8</sup> but the only evidence he offers is a reference to the published letter from Ravius to Vossius asking him for a recommendation to Pococke.<sup>9</sup> There is no mention of such a recommendation by Laud in his surviving correspondence or in that of Vossius. Nor, even more significantly, does Ravius himself ever mention Laud by name. However, in the letter that he wrote to Vossius on his return from the East, he thanks him for his recommendation to an unnamed 'Magnate',<sup>10</sup> which could conceivably refer to Laud, who was not named by Ravius because at the time of writing (21 January 1642) he was a prisoner in the Tower, having been impeached by the Long Parliament. It is possible that Twells found evidence for his view in the Pococke correspondence (now entirely lost);<sup>11</sup> but I am inclined to believe that he was mistaken and that 'the Archbishop's recommendation' refers to the letter from Archbishop Ussher to Ravius of 15 January 1639,<sup>12</sup> in which he promised financial help towards his 'peregrinatio'. That letter must have reached Ravius in Paris, and he undoubtedly carried it with him.<sup>13</sup>

Ravius himself put a different slant on the manner of his arrival at Constantinople. In a letter to G.J. Vossius written thence on 13 April 1640,<sup>14</sup> he says that the Resident of the United Provinces, Hendrik Cops,<sup>15</sup> had promised him board and lodging for up to two years,<sup>16</sup> but that he had been forestalled by Pococke and the English ambassador, as soon as Ravius showed them the rec-

8 Ibid., p. 14.

9 *Vossii Epistolæ*, part 2, p. 191 (no. 288).

10 Ibid., p. 220 (no. 329): 'ad Magnatem me recommendabas, & Illustrissimus Grotius eo me nomine amavit'. The reference to Grotius (who had no significant relationship with Laud), and not to Pococke, also counts against the identification with Laud. Furthermore, Ravius says that Pococke 'Anno 1639. at Constantinople became very active on my behalfe with my Lord Ambassador' out of respect to Ussher: Ravius, *Discourse of the Orientall Tongues*, 'Epistle Dedicatory'.

11 On the fate of Pococke's correspondence, see G.J. Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 3–6.

12 See n. 4 above.

13 In the dedication to Ussher of his *Discourse of the Orientall Tongues* Ravius attributes the activity of Pococke and Edward Stringer (see below) on his behalf in Constantinople to their 'respect unto your Grace'.

14 *Vossii Epistolæ*, part 2, pp. 195–6 (no. 295).

15 He had succeeded Cornelius Haga as Ambassador in 1638. Ravius considered him enough of a patron to list him among the many dedicatees of his *Specimen lexicæ Arabico-Persico-Latini* (Leiden, 1645).

16 Much the same is implied by the statement in his *Panegyrica secunda Orientalibus linguis dicta* (Utrecht, 1644), p. 3 (addressing Cornelius Haga, to whom the work was dedicated): 'Quod autem Ego, post discessum inde tuum, aliquot à meo adventu menses, iisdem splendidissimis ædibus reciperer, & tuo jussu, Magnificus & Amplissimus D. Henricus

ommendation which Vossius had given him to carry to England.<sup>17</sup> I would guess that the actual sequence of events was that Ravius, learning on his arrival at Constantinople that the addressee of his recommendation from the States General, Ambassador Haga, had returned to Europe, applied instead to the English Ambassador, producing as his credentials the recommendations of Vossius and de Dieu and also the letter from Archbishop Ussher. Pococke, who was already in residence with Sir Sackville Crowe, and had a longstanding friendship with Vossius and warm relations with de Dieu,<sup>18</sup> vouched for him, as Ravius asserts.<sup>19</sup> It was only later that Ravius got in touch with Cops to show him the Dutch recommendation.

His finances at this time (as often in his career) remain mysterious. The letter of Pococke quoted above suggests that Ravius was entirely destitute when he reached Constantinople. It is true that Ussher sent him the support for his travels in the East that he had promised, but he did not actually dispatch the first (£12) instalment of the annual stipend of £24 until 12 November 1639;<sup>20</sup> and under the contemporary circumstances of transmission (a letter from Ireland to London, authorizing a bill of exchange between merchants at London and Constantinople), it could not have reached Ravius before 1640. Until then he presumably relied on the hospitality of the English ambassador and other members of the English communities at Constantinople and Smyrna for his daily food and lodging, but he also must have acquired funds. For already on 8 September 1639, we find him buying a manuscript.<sup>21</sup> We may conjecture that in Constantinople, as at most places where he travelled, he was accumulating debts. We know that he enjoyed the support of at least one member of the English merchant community. This was Edward Stringer, Treasurer of the Levant Company at Constantinople, and soon to take up the position of English Consul at Smyrna.<sup>22</sup> Stringer was no ordinary merchant, but a man of wide intellectual interests. John Greaves, in a letter to an unnamed correspondent

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Cops, Tuus, ex Sorore Nepos Nobilissimus, qui tuas interim ibi partes felicissimè peragit, ad omnia tua & sua me adscisceret, id verò multò majoris erat benevolentiae.'

17 A further indication that neither Ravius nor Pococke knew of any recommendation from Vossius to Laud, much less one from Laud to Sir Sackville Crowe.

18 See Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, pp. 117, 119, 223 n. 57.

19 See n. 10 above.

20 Letter of that date from Ussher to Samuel Hartlib: *Correspondence of Ussher*, 2: 801 (no. 465).

21 Sion College, MS Or. 4 (kept in Lambeth Palace Library), inscribed on the first page: 'Ex Bibliothecâ Christiani Ravii Berlinatis MSSorum Orientalium Smyrna emtus Codex 8° Sept. 1639'. On Ravius's excursion to Smyrna, see below.

22 A.C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (repr. London, 1964), Appendix 11.

(maybe Peter Turner) written from Constantinople in 1638,<sup>23</sup> says that 'Mr Stringer of New College<sup>24</sup> his kinsman' assisted him with his astronomical observations. Ravius praises highly a Turkish lexicon which Stringer had composed and expects him to produce other works about the Turks.<sup>25</sup> When Stringer left Constantinople by ship to take up his new post of Consul at Smyrna, he took Ravius with him. That is stated in the *Funeral Programme*,<sup>26</sup> and confirmed by Ravius himself in the 'Epistle Dedicatory' to *Discourse of the Orientall Tongues*.<sup>27</sup>

This expedition to Smyrna took place not long after Ravius had arrived in Turkey, since, as we saw,<sup>28</sup> he bought a manuscript there on 8 September 1639. He probably did not stay long, but he does record one other event of his sojourn there, the funeral of a young English merchant, attended by Ravius while he was staying with the Consul.<sup>29</sup> His long and vivid account was given in a public oration at Utrecht some years later,<sup>30</sup> in which he described the magnificent procession, attended by the consuls of all the foreign 'nations' (English, French, Venetian and Dutch) as well as the merchant communities, and how the barge carrying the coffin to the cemetery was saluted by repeated cannonades from ten French and English ships then in the harbour. The clamouring throngs of spectators from among the local inhabitants (Ravius mentions 'Greeks, Armenians, Turks and even Persians') was so great that the Turkish

23 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Smith 93, pp. 137–8. On Stringer's possible participation in astronomical observations at Smyrna, see Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, pp. 139–40 with n. 52.

24 This is Henry Stringer, Fellow and later Warden of New College, who was also interested in Oriental languages: see M. Feingold, 'Patrons and Professors: the Origins and Motives for the Endowment of University Chairs—in Particular the Laudian Professorship of Arabic', in *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. G.A. Russell (Leiden, 1994), pp. 109–27; p. 124.

25 Christianus Ravius, *De lingua Turcica*: London, British Library, MS Harley 3496, fol. 100: 'promitto, eum multa egregia de politia moribusque Turcarum perscripturum'. On this work of Ravius and Stringer's lexicon, see below.

26 *Funeral Programme*, sig. [A4r], where Stringer, whose generosity is stressed, appears slightly corrupted as 'Mercatore Anglico Sbringero'.

27 Ravius, *Discourse of the Orientall Tongues*, 'Epistle Dedicatory': 'the treasurer his [Pococke's] and my host and the consull of Smyrna, Mr. Edward Stringer a most worthy & excellently learned Gentleman'. The reference to Stringer also being Pococke's host implies that Pococke accompanied Ravius on his Smyrna expedition, an event not attested in Twells, 'Life of Pocock'.

28 See n. 21 above.

29 Ravius, *Panegyrica secunda*, p. 24: 'cum domo Illustrissimi consulis Edoardi Stringheri, Fautoris & Amici mei nunquam non cum honore nominandi, viverem'.

30 *Ibid.*, pp. 24–7.



Janissaries who had been hired for the purpose had difficulty enforcing passageway through them.

The chance survival of a document throws a sidelight on Ravius's stay in Smyrna. This is a letter to him from Johann Herrmayr,<sup>31</sup> who originated from the small town of Ensisheim in Alsace but was currently a captive on a Turkish galley. In this extraordinary missive, the letter proper is preceded by a poem, in passably good Latin elegiac couplets, bewailing the author's sufferings and appealing for help in obtaining his release by ransom. From it (and also from the subscription to the letter in *lingua franca*), we learn that he was a slave aboard the galley of the Ottoman governor of Rhodes, to whom he refers to as 'Beggirbassa'.<sup>32</sup> The poetic references to chains on his neck and feet and to oars<sup>33</sup> imply that he had been one of the rowers, but the subscription lists him as 'trumpeter',<sup>34</sup> and the fact that he could send and receive letters also indicates a more privileged position. The Latin letter to Ravius which follows the poem is dated from Chios, 2 June 1640, hence must have reached Ravius in Constantinople. It reveals that the two had met and become friends at Smyrna, through the good offices of one Johannes Francus, now occupying the 'residency' there, and described by a truncated word which might be read as 'Ang<lo>'. This was not the English consul (who was, as we have seen, Edward Stringer), but might have been an English merchant who was acting as consul or agent for another 'nation' in Smyrna, perhaps the Austrian (Alsace was at that time under the rule of the Austrian Hapsburgs). Herrmayr thanks Ravius profusely for the letter that he had sent and begs him to continue to intercede for him with 'our Resident',<sup>35</sup> and with the ambassador of the emperor if one should arrive at Constantinople. I have found only one other piece of information about the writer, but it illustrates poignantly the sad case of a man who, as his Latin poem and the title of M[agister] applied to him both by Ravius and himself, was a graduate of a university. Among the archives relating to the Hapsburg rule of Alsace is an order from the Archduke Leopold to the Chamber to provide 100 crowns for the ransom of 'Jean Hermeyer, natif d'Ensisheim, prisonnier des Turcs à Tunis'.<sup>36</sup> It is dated 4 September 1630, so when he wrote

31 Uppsala, University Library, MS N. 478, fol. 108.

32 Herrmayr seems to mean this as a title, but Maurits van den Boogert plausibly suggests that it represents the common Turkish name "Bekir" followed by the honorific "Pasha".

33 Ibid.: 'infelix remis rhodiana ~~tr~~emis carina',

34 Ibid.: 'trombeteire e scia<v<o> del Beggirbassa, Bassa di Rodos'. The use of trumpeters is well attested for contemporary Venetian galleys, so presumably at least some Turkish commanders imitated the practice.

35 Ibid.: 'pro me intercedere non cesses apud Illustrissimum nostrum Residentem'.

36 Online catalogue of Archives Départementales du Haut-Rhin, Archives Anciennes, Série

to Ravius he had already been a captive for more than ten years, and previous efforts to ransom him had obviously come to nothing. His ultimate fate is unknown, but Ravius preserved his letter, probably to the end of his own life, which is an indication that it touched his compassion.

We do not know how long Ravius stayed in Smyrna, but it seems likely that he returned to Constantinople very soon, for in his letter to Vossius of 13 April 1640,<sup>37</sup> he says that he had been there almost ten months, without mentioning any absences. Apart from the Smyrna expedition, the only specific information we have about his activities during these ten months is his claim to have witnessed, as a spectator,<sup>38</sup> the coronation of the Sultan Ibrahim I, which took place in February 1640. His avowed aim in going to the East was to improve his knowledge of Oriental languages, and indeed the *Funeral Programme* states that he did so, mentioning 'Greek, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Persian and other languages'.<sup>39</sup> We cannot doubt that the other languages included Arabic, and that Ravius did diligently cultivate his knowledge of the local languages, although there is no evidence that he employed the services of native speakers, as his models, Golius and Pococke, had. His stay at the English ambassador's residence certainly aided him in developing the remarkable knowledge of idiomatic English which he was to display in his later London publications. It is obvious that he spent much time walking about the city and observing local life. His talent for keen perception, which we have already seen in connection with the funeral at Smyrna, is also displayed in his comments about the Turks at various places in his published works.

One activity in which he employed much time and energy was the collection of manuscripts. In this he was following the example of Golius and Pococke, both of whom brought or sent back remarkable collections.<sup>40</sup> Unlike them, Ravius did not enjoy the financial support of a patron for this activity;<sup>41</sup>

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C, Cote 01C (Administration de la Chambre, Baillage d'Ensisheim) no. 7902 [<http://www.archives.haut-rhin.fr/resource/a0114437761385hj5tH>]

37 See n. 6 above

38 Letter to Johann Heinrich Hottinger, Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, MS F 52, fol. 238r: 'Imperatore Abrahamo primo ... Coronationem (cui interfui spectator)'.

39 *Funeral Programme*, sig. [A4r], wrongly implying that he did all of this while at Smyrna.

40 Golius was acting on behalf of the Leiden library, and Pococke of Archbishop Laud, but both also collected for themselves. For more details, see Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, pp. 48–9, 121–4, 135–6.

41 He stresses that Pococke, despite his ample supply of public funds ('instructissimò illo à Pecuniis Publicis'), failed to obtain the copy of the famous historical work of al-Mas'ūdī, *The Meadows of Gold*, which Ravius acquired after Pococke had left Constantinople (August 1640). See Christianus Ravius, *Spolium Orientis, Christiano orbi dicatum, sive Catalogus MSSorum Orientalium* (Kiel, 1669), Centuria 2, no. 99.

for while it is true that Ussher sent him a list of works that he wished him to buy on his behalf if he could find them,<sup>42</sup> there was little chance that Ravius would obtain any of these, and there is no evidence that he ever bought a single item for the archbishop. He was, however, very active on his own behalf. We may suspect that he spent the major part of Ussher's subsidy on these acquisitions. Furthermore, he acquired manuscripts by other means, sometimes by gift, for instance the Arabic anti-Christian treatise,<sup>43</sup> which he says he got from its owner 'per singularem gratiam, aliquotque dona',<sup>44</sup> suggesting a mutual exchange of gifts. Sometimes, however, he acquired them by unscrupulous behaviour. A notorious example is documented by a letter from Ravius's amanuensis, Nicolaus Petri (on whom see below) to the Turkish scholar Shaykhzādeh Muḥammad Efendī.<sup>45</sup> From this it appears that Ravius had borrowed, or taken on approval, some manuscripts belonging to Shaykhzādeh Muḥammad but had left Constantinople without returning them or paying for them. Years later Shaykhzādeh Muḥammad had written about the matter to Nicolaus, who had taken his letter to Golius in Leiden. Golius confronted Ravius (then living in Holland), who however declared that he had not brought the manuscripts back to Europe but left them as a pledge in the custody of English merchants in Constantinople, from whom the payment should be demanded. Nicolaus asserts that he knows that this is a lie, since he was in the company of Ravius at Constantinople and cognisant of all his dealings there.

A remarkable comment on the dangers both of acquiring manuscripts in Ottoman dominions and of Ravius's assiduity in doing so is provided by Edward Pocke in a letter to Johann Heinrich Hottinger (23 March 1642), where he remarks sarcastically:

Ravius seems to have taken care that from now on no lover of Arabic will be allowed to visit Constantinople in safety for the purpose of engaging in this kind of commerce [i.e., buying manuscripts]. That man, in his greed to acquire for himself a supply of Arabic books, not only brought great perils on himself, but was the reason for the Grand Vizier issuing a

42 *Correspondence of Ussher* 2: 802–3 (no. 466); cf. Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, p. 84.

43 Now Utrecht, University Library, MS Or. 40; see H. Kilpatrick and G.J. Toomer, 'Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī (c.1611–c.1661): A Greek Orthodox Syrian Copyist and his Letters to Pocke and Golius', *Lias*, 43 (2016), 155–6, item 5.

44 *Panegyrica secunda*, p. 13.

45 Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī', pp. 132–3, letter 18. Like many letters of Nicolaus, this is undated; for a tentative dating to 1646, see *ibid.*, p. 127.

severe interdict forbidding the booksellers to sell books of the Muslims to Christians, or at least to Franks.<sup>46</sup>

This edict helps to explain the ‘fear of the Muslims’ which Ravius and his amanuensis experienced when they were engaged in loading the manuscripts on the ship for transport back to England.<sup>47</sup> Not all the manuscripts which he had acquired during his stay accompanied him on the ship: on 24 May 1641, he compiled a catalogue of Arabic manuscripts which he had left ‘in the house of the English consul John Wolfe’.<sup>48</sup> In the same document is a list of 46 manuscripts which he had lost (in unexplained circumstances), not a few of which, he complains, he had bought on behalf of Golius, but had to stand the loss himself.<sup>49</sup>

Although we have a good deal of information from multiple sources about Ravius’s collection of manuscripts, many details remain obscure. Even the total number is uncertain, for although he often mentions 300, other totals also occur, and it is possible that that number refers, not to the manuscripts, but to the individual treatises contained in them. The most detailed list available is that published in *Spolium Orientis*, but that is avowedly incomplete and consists mostly of Arabic and Persian items, with very few Greek ones, although we know from other sources that Ravius owned several important Greek manuscripts, for instance the notorious *Codex Ravianus*.<sup>50</sup> In general, we have very little information about where or how he acquired the manuscripts. Late in life, it is true, he did publish some remarks on the topic,<sup>51</sup> but those are con-

46 Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, MS F 52, fol. 4r: ‘Cavisse videtur Vir doctiss. Ctianus. Ravius, ne, cui Philarabum huiusmodi mercaturæ exercendæ gratia Constantinopolim tuto adhuc adire liceat. Avidus ille librorum Arabicorum supellectilem sibi conquirendi, non solum maxima sibi accersivit pericula, sed et in causa fuit, ut severo Magni Vizieri mon[?itu] Bibliopolis, ne Christianis, Francis saltem, Mohammedanorum libros communicarent, interdiceretur.’

47 See Kilpatrick and Toomer, ‘Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī’, p. 45.

48 Moscow, State Museum, MS Uvarov 1213–4°, fols. 178r–179v, ‘Catalogus Manuscriptorum Arabicorum quæ Christianus Ravius reliquit in domo Consolis Anglici Joh. Wolf. Wolfe was not a consul, but the Treasurer of the Levant Company in Constantinople: see Wood, *History of the Levant Company*, p. 90.

49 Moscow SM, MS Uvarov 1213–4°, fol. 181. This is the only evidence that he was in communication with Golius while in Constantinople.

50 A manuscript of the New Testament, once thought to be an important witness, but eventually revealed to be a faulty copy of the text of the Complutensian Bible. See the description by C. de Boor, *Verzeichniss der Griechischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1897) 2: 123 (no. 242). Other Greek manuscripts formerly owned by Ravius are catalogued *ibid.*, nos. 300, 304, 305, 308, 321 & 325.

51 Ravius, *Spolium Orientis*, ‘Admonitio ad Lectorem’, sig. Eir.

fined to the difficulties and expense of obtaining them. He claims that it was dangerous to approach Muslims directly, that the business often had to be transacted through several hands and that one had to use as intermediaries Franks who were familiar with Turkish habits, Greeks or Jews.<sup>52</sup> He also says that Ussher provided him with 1,000 Reichsthaler<sup>53</sup> (implying that he spent it on buying manuscripts), and that others (unspecified) also helped him in this regard.

This narrative implies that his manuscripts were acquired in Ottoman dominions, and indeed where we do know the place of origin, it is usually Constantinople. He states that thousands of manuscripts can be found for sale in the Grand Bazaar there.<sup>54</sup> The manuscript of which Ravius was most proud, containing an Arabic translation of Apollonius's *Conics*, was acquired at Constantinople in 1641, according to the note in his own hand on the inside front cover.<sup>55</sup> He boasts that he acquired, at great expense, a 'Slavonic, Greek, Persian and Arabic Lexicon' which had formerly been in the Ottoman emperor's library in Constantinople.<sup>56</sup> Likewise, he informs us that his manuscript of al-Zamakhsharī's Arabic dictionary (*Asās al-Balāgha*) was bought for 140 Reichsthaler at Constantinople with the help of Pococke.<sup>57</sup> However, we have already seen that he acquired a manuscript at Smyrna, and the *Funeral Programme* asserts that he collected also on his tour through Asia Minor (on which see below). Moreover, in 1652 Pococke, responding to an invitation from John Selden to inspect some manuscripts owned by Ravius but currently in Selden's keeping,<sup>58</sup> remarks 'which I take to be not only a collection of his in

52 The item, *ibid.*, Cent. I no. 12, was 'Emptus Constantinopoli pro 57 Ducatis per manus Judæorum'.

53 Ravius usually refers to this monetary unit as 'Imperiales' (occasionally 'Joachimici'), but his use of the term does not necessarily imply that the transaction was in that coin. In this case we know that Ussher sent out pounds sterling (see above). At Constantinople, Ravius seems to have treated the Reichsthaler as the equivalent of the Ottoman piastre.

54 Ravius, *De lingua Turcica*, fol. 103r (on which see below). The Turkish name, which he gives as 'Besisten', is 'bedesten'.

55 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Thurston 3: 'Christianus Ravius Berlinensis Constantinopoli comparavit hunc APOLLONII PERGAEI de Conicis Sectionibus unà cum Triginta et aliquot tractatibus Mathematicis Codicem Vetustissimum, Scriptum Anno Higirae Sexcentesimo Quadringentos et quinquaginta annos post sc. Anno 1551. Anno christi 1641.' On this manuscript, see Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḳūlāwus al-Ḥalabī', p. 156, item 6, with the literature cited there.

56 Christianus Ravius, *Obtestatio ad universam Europam, pro discendis rebus et linguis Orientalibus* (Utrecht, 1644), sig. D2<sup>v</sup>.

57 Ravius, *Spolium Orientis*, Cent. I no. 3.

58 No doubt as security for debts; see G.J. Toomer, *John Selden: A Life in Scholarship*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2009), 2: 588.

Turky, but more at London of bookes by the directions of others gotten by merchants, who by reason of the disturbance of the times knew not how to dispose of them'.<sup>59</sup>

There is no doubt that Ravius spent much time in Constantinople improving his acquaintance with the languages and the local religious communities. For instance, he incidentally remarks that while there he often attended the services of the 'Kershunis' (Christians who retained the Syriac liturgies).<sup>60</sup> He also claims, in a letter to Hottinger (3 November 1645),<sup>61</sup> considerable familiarity with the Greek Orthodox community there, including the Patriarch of Constantinople Parthenius, whom he describes as 'an obscure and almost illiterate man, completely devoid of love of religion'.<sup>62</sup> If Ravius indeed knew him, this must be Parthenius I, Patriarch from 1639 to 1644;<sup>63</sup> but doubts are raised by his claim, in the same letter, that he could if he wished correspond with the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Athanasius, with whom he was very familiar at Constantinople.<sup>64</sup> There is nothing inherently implausible in this, since the Orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem was usually resident in Constantinople, but the name of the patriarch in office from 1608 to 1646 was Theophanes,<sup>65</sup> which may lead one to suspect that Ravius was indulging in idle boasts about all his patriarchal acquaintances. However, there can be little doubt that he knew the parlous situation of the Orthodox community there after the murder of Patriarch Cyril. In the same letter he describes in vivid detail the corruption of the Orthodox clergy, who, according to him, from the patriarch on downwards to the merest monks, are consumed by avarice and other vices, so that all ecclesiastical offices are for sale.

Further interesting information about his stay in Constantinople may be gleaned from his little treatise *De lingua Turcica*. This was never published and survives only in a single autograph copy now in the British Library, MS Harley 3496 (fols. 90–118). Its provenance is unknown, but I would guess that it is the copy that Ravius gave to Edward Stringer. The treatise was evidently intended

59 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Selden supra 109, fol. 341<sup>r</sup>.

60 Christianus Ravius, *A Generall Grammer for the Ebrew, Samaritan, Calde, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic Tongue* (London, 1648 & 1649), p. 143 [misprinted 134].

61 Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, MS F 52, fols. 225<sup>r</sup>–226<sup>v</sup>.

62 Ibid., fol. 226<sup>v</sup>: 'mihi Notissimus Vir est homo ut ἄμαυρος & ἀναλφάβητος ferè, ita ab omni quoque religionis amore alienus'.

63 M. Chaine, *La chronologie des temps chrétiens de l'Égypte et de l'Éthiopie* (Paris, 1923), p. 259.

64 Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, MS F 52, fol. 225<sup>r</sup>: 'si vellem literis invisere Hierosolymitarum Patriarchum Athanasium, quem Constantinopoli videre, & familiariter colere licebat'.

65 Chaine, *Chronologie*, p. 261.

as a preface to Stringer's *Turkish Lexicon*,<sup>66</sup> which it not only praises (fol. 100r), but describes as 'this present'.<sup>67</sup> That lexicon was never published and is apparently lost; but it provided the occasion for Ravius to produce this opuscle, which, from internal evidence, was written in Constantinople while he was resident there,<sup>68</sup> i.e., in late 1639 or early 1640. The approximate date is given by Ravius's expectation that Johann Elichmann (with whom he had lodged while studying in Leiden) will produce much to the benefit of scholarship (fol. 101v). Elichmann died in late 1639, but the news of his death may not have reached Constantinople until the following year. The treatise is for the most part a disquisition in praise of the Turkish language, extolling its elegance, euphony and utility. Ravius contrasts its literature favourably with the style of poetry current in Europe, illustrating this (fol. 93) with an anecdote about a renegade monk,<sup>69</sup> who translated his own Spanish poems into Turkish to flatter his new co-religionists, yet met with nothing but scorn and derision from them. Likewise, he extols the superiority of Turkish to Arabic, both in euphony (which he illustrates by the principle of 'vowel harmony', fol. 94v), and also in ease of learning. In particular, the roots of Turkish words are far easier to distinguish than those of Arabic and related languages, in which the so-called 'servile' elements (which denote the tenses, persons, etc.) often precede the root, making it difficult to look the word up in a lexicon. As an example (fol. 98v), he takes the Turkish root 'sev'<sup>70</sup> (basic meaning 'love'), where the infinitive 'sevmek' illustrates how the servile elements always follow the root.

The utility of the Turkish language is treated at length (fols. 103v-14v). Ravius emphasizes how widely it is spoken in Asia and Africa (i.e., throughout the Ottoman Empire), hence knowledge of it will enable Europeans to penetrate those areas and harvest all manner of goods. Although he does mention the advantage to merchants, his principal concern is with the intellectual harvest. He envisages the spread of the 'Respublica Litterarum' to encompass the Ottoman dominions and also Asia, Africa and even America (fol. 107v). Not only

66 It is probably the same as the 'præfationem cum Lexico Turcico' which Ravius sent to Claude Hardy in January 1642 (letter of latter in Ravius, *Specimen lexici Arabico-Persico-Latini*, p. [3]).

67 Ravius, *De lingua Turcica*, fol. 109r: 'hoc præsens Cl. STRINGERI Lexicon'. Cf. 'Lexicon ... quod cum nunc det ... EDOARDUS STRINGERUS' (fol. 100r); 'STRINGERUM, Lexici hujus autorem' (fol. 118v).

68 Constantinople is referred to (*ibid.*, fols. 108v, 110r) as 'ex hoc loco'.

69 *Ibid.*, fols. 93r-94r. He had presumably been captured by corsairs and enslaved, since Ravius goes on to say that after failing to gain his object with the Turks, he offered to convert to Judaism if the Jews would ransom him, but they refused.

70 He castigates du Ryer for not recognizing in his Turkish grammar that the root should be identified as the bare imperative ('sev', 'love!'), and not the infinitive.

theologians, but doctors, astronomers and especially historians could benefit from the stores of knowledge in the hands of the Turkish savants (he claims that there are three or four thousand Oriental histories available, fol. 113r). In order to enjoy these riches, he urges European scholars to travel to the East and also to establish an institution for training the young in Turkish (fols. 116v-17r), to act as interpreters there. The latter counsel anticipates not only Ravius's much later abortive proposal for an 'Oriental College',<sup>71</sup> but also the 'École des Jeunes de langues' successfully established by the French in 1669. It would be useful for the European diplomats to have their own interpreters, instead of relying on the services of Greek or Jewish translators, who are afraid that if they say something displeasing to the 'Pasha' while interpreting, he will have them strangled (fol. 117r).

Ravius not only praises the beauty and utility of the language, but, unusually for a European of his time, speaks highly of the Turks themselves, or at least those educated men with whom he had discourse. He found them dignified and pleasant in conversation (fol. 95), and of excellent character,<sup>72</sup> who could serve as an example of morality to some Christians, such as the Armenians, who constantly cheat 'our merchants'. He urges the student desiring to learn oriental languages to come to Constantinople, where he will find the educated Turks eager to engage in conversation with Europeans (fol. 103r). Since all men desire knowledge, European scholars ought to undertake to spread the sciences to the East, and also to learn from the scholars there (fols. 103-6).

In the course of this treatise Ravius mentions incidentally several works which he was either composing or had completed (none of which survive). These comprise advice to students,<sup>73</sup> and a history of Turkish scholarship.<sup>74</sup> He also says (fols. 114v-15v) that Golius had promised him that he would compose two treatises, one in Arabic urging Muslims to convert, the other in Latin for theologians, describing the culture of Turks and Arabs, and how they might best be converted. Addressing Golius, he urges him to fulfil the promise, with the implication that he is allowing himself to be distracted by less important

71 Set out in *Literæ Circulares Wegen Errichtung eines Collegii Orientalis, Zu Auffnamb und propagation der Orientalischen Sprachen und Studien ... Abgelassen von Christiano Raviio und Matthia Wasmuth* (Kiel, 1670).

72 London, British Library, MS Harley 3496, fol. 95v: 'tam elegantem linguam dignam sic bene moratis hominibus'.

73 Ibid., fol. 102r: 'varia ad studiosos consilia & capita mea'.

74 Ibid., fol. 107r: 'historia mea eruditionis Turcicæ s. Bibliotheca Turcica, quam nunc conscribo'.



matters,<sup>75</sup> and hinting that, if Golius fails in this pious duty, he himself would undertake it.

Ravius's original intention was not to stay in Constantinople the whole time but to travel on to more distant parts of the East. In letters to G.J. Vossius and his son Isaac written on the same day, 13 April 1640,<sup>76</sup> he says that in a month or slightly more he will travel to Persia, although he confides to the father that he lacks the funds for it. In the event he did not go to Persia. He did, however, undertake another journey in the East. The *Funeral Programme* informs us that he visited the churches of Asia in the company of the brother of the 'Earl of Candisch' and other English nobles.<sup>77</sup> That was Charles Cavendish, younger son of the second Earl of Devonshire (and brother of the third Earl, William Cavendish). His travels in the years 1638–41 are documented by John Aubrey and an early biographical account of the Cavendish family utilized by White Kennett.<sup>78</sup> According to the chronology of the latter,<sup>79</sup> Cavendish arrived in Constantinople in the spring of 1640, then made 'a long Circuit by Land thro' *Natolia*', before returning to England via Alexandria, Cairo, Malta, Spain and a stay in Paris, arriving home at the end of May 1641. From the entry in the *Funeral Programme* we can be more specific. The circuit through Anatolia probably comprised, or included, visits to the 'Seven Churches of Asia', mentioned in the Book of Revelation, chs. 1–3, namely Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea, an itinerary very popular with later Christian travellers to Turkey.<sup>80</sup> Cavendish and his party may not have reached all seven locations,<sup>81</sup> but they were certainly at Ephesus: Ravius, discussing

75 Ibid., fol. 115r: 'abstrahi se per minora studia'.

76 *Vossii Epistolæ*, part 2, p. 196 (no. 295); Amsterdam, University Library, MS III E 10 (347).

77 *Funeral Programme*, sig. [A4v]: 'Anno M DC XLI. cum fratre *Comitis de Candisch*, aliisque Angliæ nobilibus Asiaticas Ecclesias visitatum ivit, ubique augendo thesauro suo & colligendis gentis ejus codicibus ... intentus'.

78 John Aubrey, *Brief Lives with An Apparatus for the Lives of the English Mathematical Writers*, ed. K. Bennett, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2015), 1: 91–2; White Kennett, *Memoirs of the Family of Cavendish* (London, 1708), p. 8.

79 See Bennett's reconstruction of this in her note on the life of Charles Cavendish Colonel, Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, 2: 860–62, quoting the relevant part of Kennett.

80 According to Thomas Smith, *Remarks Upon the Manners, Religion and Government of the Turks. Together with A Survey of the Seven Churches of Asia* (London, 1678), p. 206, who made the tour in 1670, it had been instituted as an annual practice by English merchants of Smyrna 'some few years since'; but he was a notoriously slovenly historian, and I have no doubt that the practice had begun much earlier.

81 Ravius, *Panegyrica prima Orientalibus linguis dicta* (Utrecht, 1643), p. 32, claims to have obtained manuscripts from 'the seven Asiatic Churches' among other places: 'satis præcociem ficum vel ipsa Constantinopoli & Asia Minori, septemque Ecclesiis Asiaticis, totidemque insulis Archipelagi attuli'.

Arabic writing in his *Generall Grammer*,<sup>82</sup> mentions a Kufic inscription '(as I have seene it at *Ephesus* in a table) that hangs there in a Church built by a *Turck* to the honour of *Jesus Christ* called *Isa Peigamber* [i.e., 'Jesus the Prophet']'. It is difficult to determine when this tour began and for how long it lasted.<sup>83</sup> The *Funeral Programme* says that it took place in the year 1641, but the above chronology of Cavendish's subsequent travels, ending May 1641, would scarcely allow time for the long circuit through Anatolia earlier in the same year. He had reached Constantinople in spring 1640, where, as an English noble from a distinguished family, he would undoubtedly have been invited to stay with the Ambassador. Hence, we may plausibly explain Ravius's expectation that he would travel to Persia by the end of May 1640, despite his lack of funds, by supposing that he had cultivated Cavendish's acquaintance at the Residency, and been invited to accompany him on his travels. There is evidence in Aubrey's life of Cavendish that he had intended to go to Baghdad,<sup>84</sup> which the Turks had reconquered from the Persians only two years previously. He may well have hoped to go on across the border into Persia proper. In the event neither Ravius nor Cavendish got to Persia or Baghdad, but it seems probable that their tour through Asia Minor took place partly or wholly in 1640.<sup>85</sup>

At the end of the tour, while Cavendish continued to Alexandria, Ravius must have returned to Constantinople, for it was from there that he eventually embarked going back to England. Before doing so, however, he engaged the services of a man who was to play an important part in his life, and whose letters are an invaluable contemporary source for it. This was Nicolaus Petri,<sup>86</sup> originally a silk-weaver from Aleppo,<sup>87</sup> where he may have been deacon of the

82 Ravius, *A Generall Grammer*, p. 102.

83 No firm conclusion can be drawn from *Correspondence of Ussher*, 3: 824–5, no. 480, in which Ussher expresses to Hartlib his disapproval of 'the eagerness of his [Ravius's] desire to adventure so suddenly upon an Eastern journey'. The letter is dated 30 September 1640, and probably refers to the plan to travel to Persia, but since we do not know how long the information took to get from Ravius in Constantinople to Hartlib in London, and from him to Ussher in Oxford, it does no more than confirm what Ravius says in his letters to the two Vossii (above).

84 See Bennett's note in Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, 2: 861–2.

85 The *Funeral Programme*, sig. [A4v] also makes a mistake of a year in the date of Ravius's return to England (1642 instead of 1641).

86 'Nicholas son of Peter'; he signs himself 'Niḡūlāwus son of Buṭrus of Aleppo' in a letter to Golius: Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī', p. 81, letter 8.

87 Ravius, *Panegyrica prima*, p. 22: 'Halebi ... Vnde oriundus est Doctissimus, & mille Arabibus Muhammedanis contra Eruditus ille meus Arabs, Nicolaus Petri, religione Christianus, professione Græcus, artificio textor sericus.'

Greek Orthodox church.<sup>88</sup> Although Ravius says that Nicolaus could read Greek,<sup>89</sup> it is probable that he was only familiar with the Greek liturgy, for it is certain that his native language was Arabic. He was fluent in Arabic and Turkish, could write both well and was, as Golius said, 'not uneducated'.<sup>90</sup> Ravius met him in Constantinople,<sup>91</sup> and gives the following account of Nicolaus's reason for being there:

I brought back with me a Christian Arab, citizen of Aleppo, son of an upright parent, and [himself] father of sons, who, abandoning his wife in the face of the impending expedition to Babylon [i.e., Baghdad] in the year 1638, which [city] the Turk recovered from the Persians in 1639, to avoid being carried off to Babylon with the others [who were compelled to go] to fill up ditches [presumably for the siege], had come to Constantinople.<sup>92</sup>

However, it seems that Nicolaus considered himself a resident of Constantinople, since in a letter to Pococke he says 'in Istanbul I had acquired land and property'.<sup>93</sup> Ravius's purpose in employing him was to take him back to Europe and there use him as an amanuensis, especially for copying Oriental manuscripts. It is probably not a coincidence that not long before this John Greaves,

88 See Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī', p. 13, for the evidence, and doubts about its meaning.

89 *Panegyrica secunda*, p. 11: 'Sexcentos autores extare patres ferè omnes, aut tot equidem volumina in sua solum Græcorum Halebi ecclesia, suisque Monasteriis apud Metropolitam, publica bibliotheca, refert meus Arabs Halebensis D. Nicolaus Petri oculatus testis, & qui iis sæpè usus est.'

90 As excerpted in Alexander Nicoll, *Catalogi Bibliothecæ Bodleianæ codicum manuscriptorum Orientalium pars secunda Arabicos complectens*, ed. E.B. Pusey (Oxford, 1835), p. 350, no. CCCLVI: 'non illiteratus'. The description of him by Ravius as 'very learned' and 'erudite' (n. 87 above) is, however, a typical exaggeration. For the use of more colloquial Arabic in his letters, see Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī', pp. 30 ff.

91 I would conjecture that he was introduced to Ravius by Pococke, before the latter left Constantinople in August 1640. For the familiarity with Pococke and admiration for his skill in Arabic which Nicolaus evinces in his letters to him (see Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī', p. 49) are unlikely to have resulted from a single short visit to Oxford in the company of Ravius.

92 Letter to Johann Jacob Ulrich, 22 July 1646 (Zurich, Zentralbibliothek, MS F 45, fol. 7r): 'deduxeram mecum Arabem Christianum, Civem Halebensem, probi parentis filium, filiorumque patrem, qui profugus ab uxore ad instantem Babylonicam anno 1638 expeditionem, quam Turca 1639 recuperavit à Persis ne una cum reliquis abriperetur Babylone fossis complendis Constantinopolin venerat'. For doubts about the veracity of this account, see Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī', p. 11.

93 See Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī', p. 45.

writing from Constantinople, expressed a similar purpose: 'I intend if I can light upon any Greek, that writes a faire hand, & can speak Arabick, to bring him home with me, who shall copy out such things as you require.'<sup>94</sup> Greaves had left Constantinople before Ravius arrived,<sup>95</sup> but he had been in the ambassador's residence with Pococke, who undoubtedly talked to Ravius about his friend's plans. However, it is probable that Greaves and Ravius each independently got the idea of bringing back an Arabic-speaking amanuensis from Golius,<sup>96</sup> who described such a plan in a letter written from Aleppo to G.J. Vossius in 1627.<sup>97</sup> Although he did not actually bring anyone with him from the East, he certainly made much use of Arabic-speaking amanuenses to copy manuscripts.<sup>98</sup> Ravius made promises of reward to Nicolaus which persuaded him to accompany him to Europe,<sup>99</sup> leaving his family behind,<sup>100</sup> a decision which he later bitterly regretted. At this time, however, he was probably impressed by the large number of manuscripts which he saw loaded on the ship taking them from Constantinople.<sup>101</sup>

Nicolaus could not yet have known that Ravius was heavily in debt and indeed had not paid for some of the manuscripts. It seems that he left a number of valuable manuscripts behind as pledges for his debts. This is an inference from the list of Arabic manuscripts which he deposited with the merchant John Wolfe in Constantinople on 24 May 1641 (i.e., shortly before he left to return to England).<sup>102</sup> It is further confirmed by his statement in a letter to Isaac Vossius of 6 July 1647 that the manuscripts has been left as security for a debt, but had been redeemed by a merchant who had them in London and was

94 Copy in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Smith 93, p.138; the original was written from Constantinople 1638, probably to Peter Turner.

95 For an account of his Eastern travels, see Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning*, pp. 134-42.

96 Greaves had made the acquaintance of Golius during a stay at Leiden in 1633. See *ibid.*, pp. 128-9.

97 *Vossii Epistolæ*, part 2, p. 51 (no. 83) 'decretum est mihi ... virum aliquem orientalis literaturae peritum, in patriam mecum perducere, meisque impensis ibidem alere'.

98 See M.T. Houtsma, *Uit de Oostersche Correspondentie van Th. Erpenius, Jac. Golius en Lev. Warner* (Amsterdam, 1887), pp. 72-81, and W.M.C. Juynboll, *Zeventiende-eeuwsche Beoefenaars van het Arabisch in Nederland* (Utrecht, 1931), pp. 160-69.

99 Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḡūlāwus al-Ḥalabī', p. 15: '[Ravius] in Istanbul said to me, "When you come to my country I will pay you a salary and keep you in clothes."'

100 He talks of returning to his wife and children in a letter to Golius of 13 May 1642; see *ibid.*, p. 61.

101 *Ibid.*, p. 45: 'I came into his service, and brought the books over from Istanbul to Galata, and from Galata we stowed them in the ship.'

102 See n. 48 above.

demanding £60 in repayment.<sup>103</sup> Ravius eventually recovered these manuscripts, for most of them appear in the list he published much later in *Spolium Orientis*.

The journey back to England was unusually long. Ravius and Nicolaus left Constantinople on 25 May 1641,<sup>104</sup> but only to go to Smyrna, from where they embarked on 15 July in the ship Sampson (Captain Mr Swanley).<sup>105</sup> They stopped at various places along the route, including Greece, Italy and four ports in Spain, although no further details are known.<sup>106</sup> The ship reached the Isle of Wight on 18 October, where the two disembarked to travel by land to London, arriving on 21 October. Ravius sent letters announcing his safe arrival to his brother Jacobus and to Brochmand on the 25th of that month,<sup>107</sup> but did not get his precious cargo of manuscripts from the ship until 4 December.<sup>108</sup>

### Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Mordechai Feingold, Jan Loop, Constantin Panchenko, Jacques Sesiano and Dirk van Miert for supplying me with photographs of manuscripts used in this paper.

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- 103 Amsterdam, University Library, MS 111 E 8 (130): 'Summa autem ea est, quod 40 Mss. Arab. Pers. Turc. relicta à me Constantinopoli in depositum pro 120 Joachimicorum debito, hic reperiam apud Mercatorem, qui persolvit Turcæ, à quo redemeram, qui nunc à me 60 libras Sterlingicas requirit.'
- 104 Most of the known details of his return journey are given by Ravius in a letter that he wrote to Caspar Erasmus Brochmand on 25 Oct. 1641; published H.F. Rørdam, 'Aktstykker til Universitets Historie i Tidsrummet 1621–60 111', *Danske Magazin*, 5th series, 2 (Copenhagen, 1889–92) 1–28, at 27.
- 105 Ravius gives this detail in *Discourse of the Orientall Tongues*, p. 69, where he also says that the journey took 17 weeks (in fact, about 14 weeks from Smyrna to England).
- 106 *Consilium peregrinationis Christiani Ravii Berlinensis ad Georgium Reedtz Nob. Dan.* (Copenhagen, 1642), sig. Aiv and especially C3r: 'qui Turciam, multasque partes Græciæ, quot insulas perlustravi, qui Hispaniam quatuor portubus appuli'.
- 107 Letter of Jacobus Ravius, Uppsala, University Library, MS N. 478, fol. 3; for the letter to Brochmand, see n. 104 above.
- 108 Letter of Ravius to John Greaves: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Smith 93, p. 109; see Kilpatrick and Toomer, 'Niḡlāwus al-Ḥalabī', pp. 40–43, letter 1.

# Die silberne Rippe der orientalischen Schrift. Johann Ernst Gerhards Stammbuch und seine Reise durch die Niederlande im Jahr 1650

*Martin Mulsow*

## 1 Ein Schriftenschrank

In den Franckeschen Stiftungen in Halle gibt es einen Schriftenschrank (Abb. 8.1). In diesem Schrank, der seit den 1720er und 30er Jahren eingerichtet wurde, werden Schriftarten von nahöstlichen bis zu indischen, russischen und ostasiatischen Zeichen ausgestellt.<sup>1</sup> Sie bilden gleichsam ein Monument der babylonischen Sprachverwirrung. Die Verschiedenheit der Schriftarten faszinierte und vermittelte einen Hauch von Exotik—zugleich befeuerte sie die Suche nach einem Zusammenhang bei den in Babel verwirrten monströsen Ablegern der Ursprache.<sup>2</sup> Johann Gerhard etwa, orientalistisch gebildeter Theologe und einer der führenden Lutheraner in Deutschland, hielt das Hebräische für die ‘matrix omnium aliarum linguarum’; auf den neueren Idiomen laste die Erbsünde von Babel, nur auf denen der Semiten nicht, denn sie hatten am Turmbau nicht mitgewirkt.<sup>3</sup> Gerhards Sohn, Johann Ernst Gerhard d.Ä. (1621–1668), lenkte denn auch schon früh sein Interesse auf diese ‘semitischen’ Sprachen.<sup>4</sup> Mit 26 Jahren, 1647, gab er Wilhelm Schickards hebräische Grammatik neu heraus und verfaßte eine eigene *Harmonia linguarum orientalium*,

1 H. Link und Th. Müller-Bahlke, Hg., *Zeichen und Wunder. Geheimnisse des Schriftenschrankes in der Kunst- und Naturalienkammer der Franckeschen Stiftungen* (Halle, 2003).

2 M. Mulsow, ‘Amulette sind dergleichen: Zeichen aus der Fremde’, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29.11.2017, S. N3; zur Babylonischen Sprachverwirrung vgl. A. Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel. Geschichte der Meinungen über Ursprung und Vielfalt der Sprachen und Völker* (Stuttgart, 1957–1963).

3 Johann Gerhard, *Commentarius super Genesin* (Jena, 1637), S. 264–71.

4 Das grundlegende Werk zu Johann Ernst Gerhard ist jetzt A. Ben-Tov, *The Practices of Oriental Studies in Seventeenth-Century Germany: The Case of Johann Ernst Gerhard (1621–1668)*, Habilitation (Universität Erfurt, 2018) (im Druck). Vgl. auch M. Mulsow, ‘An “Our Father” for the Hottentotts: Religion, Language, and The Consensus Gentium’, in C. Ginzburg, Hg., *A Historical Approach to Casuistry: Norms and Exceptions in a Comparative Perspective* (London, 2018), S. 239–61.

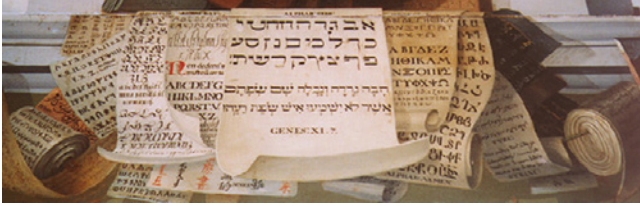


ABBILDUNG 8.1  
Schriftenschränk  
Franckesche  
Stiftungen in Halle

*scil. Chaldaicae, Syriacae, Arabicae, Aethiopicae cum Ebraica.*<sup>5</sup> Es ist die Zeit, in der sich in der Forschung gerade so etwas wie eine semitische Sprachfamilie abzeichnet: Christian Ravius veröffentlicht 1648 seine *Generall Grammer for the Ebrew, Samaritan, Calde, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic Tongue*.<sup>6</sup> Es sind Werke wie diese, die im Vorfeld des Halleschen Schriftenschranks zu erkennen sind, und wie wir sehen werden, hat auch Johann Ernst Gerhard mit Vorliebe exotische Schriftarten auf den Titelblättern seiner Dissertationen ausgestellt. Für ihn galt offenbar das, was Walter Benjamin für die Vorliebe für Fremdwörter im Gleichnis dargestellt hat: als schöbe ein Chirurg dem Patienten eine silberne Rippe in den Leib.<sup>7</sup>

Was Gerhard betrifft, so gibt es eine ungewöhnlich günstige Quellenlage: Erhalten sind nicht nur die Druckwerke und die 6000 Bände umfassende Bibliothek, sondern auch 1450 Briefe an ihn, Notizhefte, das Reisetagebuch seiner *peregrinatio academica* sowie das Stammbuch, das er auf dieser Peregrinatio geführt hat.<sup>8</sup> Dadurch bietet es sich an, an ihm exemplarisch den Typus

- 5 Johann Ernst Gerhard, *Wilhelmi Schickardi Institutiones linguae Ebraeae: accessit Harmonia perpetua aliarum linguarum Orientalium, scil. Chaldaicae, Syriacae, Arabicae, Aethiopicae cum Ebraica* (Erfurt, 1647).
- 6 Christian Ravius, *Generall Grammer for the Ebrew, Samaritan, Calde, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic Tongue* (London, 1648).
- 7 Walter Benjamin, 'Poliklinik', in id., *Einbahnstraße* (Berlin, 1928), S. 62: 'Der Autor legt den Gedanken auf den Marmortisch des Cafés. Lange Betrachtung: denn er benutzt die Zeit, da noch das Glas—die Linse, unter der er den Patienten vornimmt—nicht vor ihm steht. Dann packt er sein Besteck allmählich aus: Füllfederhalter, Bleistift und Pfeife. Die Menge der Gäste macht, amphitheatralisch angeordnet, sein klinisches Publikum. Kaffee, vorsorglich eingefüllt und ebenso genossen, setzt den Gedanken unter Chloroform. Worauf der sinnt, hat mit der Sache selbst nicht mehr zu tun, als der Traum des Narkotisierten mit dem chirurgischen Eingriff. In den behutsamen Lineamenten der Handschrift wird zugeschnitten, der Operateur verlagert im Innern Akzente, brennt die Wucherungen der Worte heraus und schiebt als silberne Rippe ein Fremdwort ein. Endlich näht ihm mit feinen Stichen Interpunktion das Ganze zusammen und er entlohnt den Kellner, seinen Assistenten, in bar.'
- 8 Zu den Gothaer Beständen vgl. den Katalog von D. Gehrt, *Katalog der Handschriften aus den Nachlässen der Theologen Johann Gerhard (1582–1637) und Johann Ernst Gerhard (1621–1668): Aus den Sammlungen der ... Forschungsbibliothek Gotha* (Wiesbaden, 2017). Die Erschließungsergebnisse sind auch in der HANS-Datenbank der Universitäts- und

des theologisch geprägten Orientalisten zu untersuchen. Im folgenden führe ich lediglich einige erste Erkundungen auf diesem Feld durch: ich stelle die Reise Gerhards durch die orientalistische Gelehrsamkeit in den Niederlanden vor, die eine Außenwahrnehmung Holländischer Bibelgelehrsamkeit im goldenen Zeitalter bietet; zum anderen werfe ich ein erstes Licht auf die Art von 'Religionswissenschaft', die Gerhard in seinen Jahren als Professor in Jena, insbesondere in den 1660er Jahren, entwickelt hat.

## 2 Reise durch die Niederlande 1650

Seit 1644 verband Gerhard eine Freundschaft und ein enger Briefaustausch mit Hiob Ludolf, dem drei Jahre jüngeren—damals zwanzigjährigen—Erfurter Studenten, der sich ebenfalls für orientalische Sprachen und insbesondere für das Äthiopische interessierte.<sup>9</sup> Ludolf studierte ab 1646 in Leiden bei Jacob Golius und Constantin L'Empereur und reiste danach nach Paris, als Hauslehrer bei Grotius' Nachfolger als schwedischem Gesandten in der französischen Hauptstadt, Baron Schering von Rosenhahn. Nachdem Rosenhahn ihn nach Rom geschickt hatte, wo Ludolf in Kontakt mit Äthiopiern kam, folgte Ludolf um 1650 seinem Herrn nach Ninköping und Stockholm, wo sich zahlreiche Gelehrte im Kreis von Königin Christina versammelt hatten, nicht zuletzt die Sprachforscher Christian Ravius und Samuel Bochart.<sup>10</sup> Von dort aus empfahl Ludolf seinen Freund Gerhard bei zahlreichen Orientalisten in den Niederlanden, als dieser im Frühjahr 1650 zu seiner eigenen *peregrinatio academica* ansetzte.

Das Tagebuch *Itinerarium diarium potius Belgicum* ist verschollen, es existiert nur der Ergänzungband zum Rest der Reise über Paris, Basel und Straßburg

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Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha online verfügbar unter der URL: <<http://hans.uni-erfurt.de/hans/index.htm>>. Vgl. weiter J.A. Steiger, *Rekonstruktion der Gelehrten- und Leihbibliothek Johann Gerhards (1582–1637) und seines Sohnes Johann Ernst Gerhard (1621–1668)* (Stuttgart, 2002). Das Stammbuch befindet sich im Besitz von Herrn Don Hertzberger. Ich danke Herrn Hertzberger für seine freundliche Erlaubnis, das Material zu benutzen.

9 Zu Ludolf vgl. J. Flemming, *Hiob Ludolf. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der orientalischen Philologie* (Leipzig, 1891); S. Weninger, 'Ein Blick in Hiob Ludolfs Werkstatt: Der zweite Psalter', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 166 (2016), S. 333–45. Zu Ludolfs Stammbuch vgl. M. Kellermann, 'Das Stammbuch des Äthiopisten Hiob Ludolf', *Studia Neophilologica*, 88 (2016), S. 190–204; M. Mulsow, 'Der Kosmopolit: Hiob Ludolf im Lichte seines Stammbuches', in M. Mulsow und A. Ben-Tov, Hg., *Ludolf und Wansleben* (Druck in Vorbereitung).

10 S. Åkerman, *Queen Christina of Sweden and her Circle. The Transformation of a Seventeenth-Century Philosophical Libertine* (Leiden, 1991), S. 104–17.



wieder zurück nach Jena.<sup>11</sup> Dennoch: aus den Eintragungen im Stammbuch lassen sich die Stationen der Fahrt leicht rekonstruieren. Die Reise muß traurig begonnen haben durch von dreißig Jahre Krieg verwüstete Landschaften und Städte, verwaiste Ortschaften und hungernde Bevölkerungen. Das Bild änderte sich erst—and dies massiv—als Gerhard in den Vereinigten Niederlanden angekommen war. Dort öffnete ihm der Name des Vaters alle Türen, neben den Briefen seiner Patrone. Ludolf etwa hatte an Jacob Thysius und Jacob Golius in Leiden geschrieben,<sup>12</sup> Thysius wiederum empfahl den jungen Mann weiter, Wittenberger Professoren gaben ganze Namenslisten von zu grüßenden Personen mit—so entfaltete sich ein Netz von Beziehungen, das den jungen Mann auf seiner Reise trug.<sup>13</sup>

Zunächst erreichte Gerhard Groningen, wo er Mitte Mai nicht nur Matthias Pasor, Jakob Alting und Samuel Maresius traf, sondern etwa auch Antonius Deusing, einen Mediziner, der als Schüler von Jacob Golius auch Arabisch gelernt hatte.<sup>14</sup> Gerhard öffnete sein Stammbuch, und Deusing schrieb über dem lateinischen Spruch 'Homo proposuit, Deus disposuit' etwas ähnliches in Arabisch, das in Reimform so etwas wie 'Der Mensch denkt, Gott lenkt' ausdrücken sollte, wenn auch etwas unbeholfen und fehlerhaft. (Abb. 8.2) Man sieht: Dies ist keine islamische, sondern eine christliche Sentenz, die Deusing ins Arabische gebracht hat.

In dieser Weise haben viele der Gelehrten, die Gerhard besuchte, ihre Spuren im Stammbuch hinterlassen: Waren sie Theologen und Hebraisten, schrieben sie etwas auf Hebräisch, konnten sie exotischere Sprachen, prunkten sie mit Syrisch, Persisch oder Arabisch. Indessen zog Gerhard weiter nach Franeker, wo Johann Cloppenburger, ein Buxtorf-Schüler, eine syrische Sentenz

11 Forschungsbibliothek Gotha (fortan zitiert als FB Gotha), MS Chart B 917. Ich benutze dankbar die Transkriptionen von Andrea Thiele.

12 Hiob Ludolf an Jacob Thysius, FB Gotha, MS Chart. A 418, fols. 61v–62v; Ludolf an Jacobus Golius, FB Gotha, MS Chart. A 418, fols. 60v–61v.

13 Zur Kultur der orientalischen Gelehrsamkeit, in die Gerhard hineinwuchs, vgl. allg. G. Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning. The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1996); J. Loop, A. Hamilton und C. Burnett, Hg., *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2017); für die anschließende Periode vgl. A. Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment* (Cambridge, Mass., 2018).

14 Zu Deusing (1612–1666) vgl. *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, 5 (1877), S. 88–9. Für die hier und im Folgenden geleisteten Entzifferungen und Übersetzungen der Stammbuch-Einträge bin ich Asaph Ben-Tov, Tilman Seidensticker und Andrea Sterk zu großem Dank verpflichtet. Ben-Tov, *Practices of Oriental Studies*, behandelt das Stammbuch in seinem Kapitel 4.



ABBILDUNG 8.2  
Eintrag Antonius  
Deusing,  
Stammbuch  
Johann Ernst  
Gerhard,  
Privatbesitz

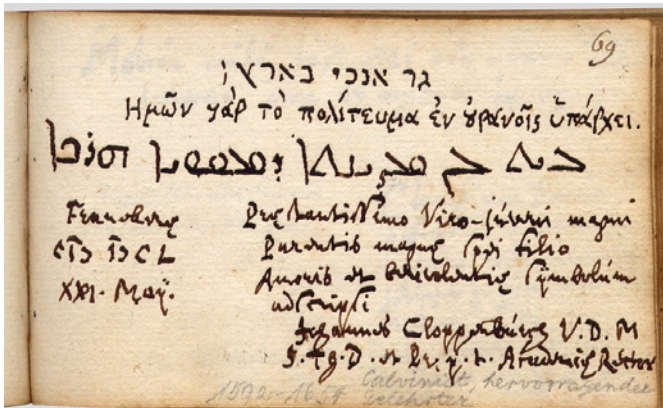


ABBILDUNG 8.3  
Eintrag Johann  
Cloppenburger

hinterließ, und von dort aus nach Amsterdam.<sup>15</sup> (Abb. 8.3) In Amsterdam ließen sich ungewöhnliche Gestalten finden, wie der irenistische Prediger Godefroid Hotton, der in Kontakt mit dem Hartlib-Kreis stand,<sup>16</sup> oder Menasseh ben Israel,<sup>17</sup> der Gerhard ein kleines Motto aus *Pirke Avot* über Prädestination vermachte (Abb. 8.4): ‘Alles ist vorausgesehen, und dennoch gibt es freie Wahl; das Urteil über die Welt ist schon geschehen, und alles wird nach den guten Werken vergolten werden.’ Aber auch Georg Gentius, ein Deutscher, der sieben Jahre im Orient gelebt hatte und jetzt von einer Pension des sächsischen

15 Zu Johann Cloppenburg(er) (1592–1652) vgl. *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (Leipzig, 1876), 4: 339.

16 Zu Hotton im Hartlib-Kreis vgl. M. Greengrass und M. Leslie, Hg., *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation. Studies in Intellectual Communication* (Cambridge, 1994).

17 Zu Menasseh vgl. S. Rauschenbach, *Judentum für Christen. Vermittlung und Selbstbehauptung Menasseh ben Israels in den gelehrten Debatten des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 2012). Vgl. auch F. Postma und A. Verheij, ‘In Signum Benevoli Affectus 1. Seven Album Inscriptions by Menasseh ben Israel’, *Zutot: Perspectives on Jewish Culture*, 6 (2009), S. 35-47.

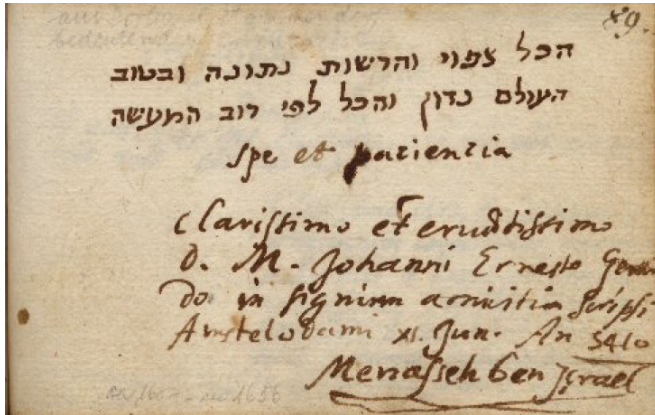


ABBILDUNG 8.4  
Eintrag Menasseh  
ben Israel

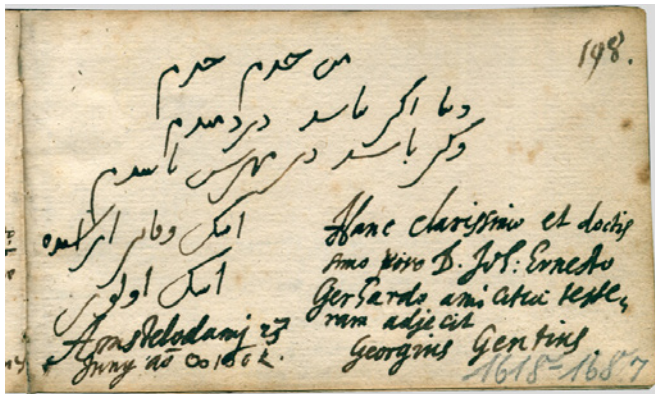


ABBILDUNG 8.5  
Eintrag Georg  
Gentius

Kurfürsten lebte, schrieb etwas.<sup>18</sup> Er saß an einer Ausgabe von Salomon Ibn Vergas *Schevet Jehuda*. ‘Vom Heiligen ein Heiliges’, notierte er auf Arabisch für Gerhard, und setzte noch ein persisches Motto hinzu (Abb. 8.5). Dieser persische Text aus zwei Halbversen stammte aus dem *Gulistān* (“Der Rosengarten”) des Dichters Saadi Shirazi aus dem 13. Jahrhundert und hieß: ‘Wenn die Welt nicht existiert, leiden wir. Wenn die Welt existiert, sind wir von ihrer Zuneigung und Liebe eingenommen.’ Im *Gulistān* folgen dann die Worte: ‘Es gibt nichts Chaotischeres als diese Welt. / Denn sie verursacht so viel Leiden, egal ob sie existiert oder nicht.’<sup>19</sup>

In Den Haag traf Gerhard am 13. und 14. Juni nicht nur Marcus Meibom und Jacob Cats, sondern er besuchte auch das Curiositätenkabinett von Johann

18 Zu Georg Gentius (1618–1687) vgl. E. Horowitz, *Reckless Rites: Purim and the Legacy of Jewish Violence* (Princeton, 2006), S. 193f.

19 Über den *Gulistān* und seine Übersetzungen vgl. A. Hamilton und F. Richard, *André Du Ryer and Oriental Studies in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford, 2004).



ABBILDUNG 8.6  
Eintrag Johann  
Georg Nissel

Schelhammer, einem Hamburger, der sich dort als Pastor der deutschen Gemeinde niedergelassen hatte.<sup>20</sup> Schelhammer schenkte ihm eine kleine Figur, einen Kobold (Josin) aus Leder, über den sich Gerhard später in seinem Buch *Umbra in luce* auslassen wird.<sup>21</sup> Die Figur stammte aus Batavia, also Java, und war über Händler der Ostindienkompagnie nach Den Haag gekommen. Der Ostindienfahrer Johann Jakob Saar hat eine ähnliche Figur in seinem Buch von 1662 beschrieben.<sup>22</sup>

Spannende Begegnungen ergaben sich auch in Leiden. Dort lebte zum Beispiel Johann Georg Nissel, ein Pfälzer, der zum Spezialisten für das Äthiopische, also für Ge'ez, geworden war und sogar eine Druckerei mit äthiopischen Lettern besaß. Er versorgte Gerhard mit dem Aphorismus 'Das Ende der Geduld ist der Anfang der Freude'<sup>23</sup> (Abb. 8.6) Zusammen mit Theodor Petersen (Petraeus) gab er äthiopische Bibeltexthe heraus. Das Äthiopische, dem sich Nissel, Gerhard und Ludolf widmeten, war um die Mitte des 17. Jahrhunderts nicht nur kirchenpolitisch interessant, sondern auch sprachlich (als mögliche älteste semitische Sprache) und realpolitisch, da man noch immer nach dem Reich des Priesterkönigs Johannes suchte, um eine Allianz gegen die Osmanen

20 Zu Johann Schelhammer (II.) (1614-1699) vgl. *Christian Gottlieb Jöcher: Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon* (Leipzig, 1751), 4: col. 242.

21 Johann Ernst Gerhard (praes.) / Christian Hoffmann (resp. et auctor), *Umbra in luce, sive consensus et dissensus religionum profanarum, Judaismi, Samaritanismi, Muhammedismi, Gingis-Chanismi, atque paganismi* (Jena, 1667), Cap. II, § 22.

22 Johann Jakob Saar, *Ost-Indianische Funfzehnen-jährige Kriegs-Dienste ...* (Nürnberg, 1662). Vgl. M. Mulsow, 'Global Intellectual History and the Dynamics of Religion' in C. Bochsinger und J. Rüpke, Hg., *Dynamics of Religion* (Berlin, 2016), S. 251–72.

23 Zu Nissel (1623-1662) vgl. *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (Leipzig, 1886), 23: 702–3 und A. Hamilton, *The Copts and the West 1439-1822. The European Discovery of the Egyptian Church* (Oxford, 2006), S. 252 und 262.



ABBILDUNG 8.7  
Eintrag Alard  
Uchtmann

zu bilden.<sup>24</sup> Mit Nissel befreundet war der Hebraist Alard Uchtmann—auch er in Kontakt mit dem Hartlib-Kreis —, der Gerhard mit einem syrischen und einem hebräischen Zitat bediente, das letztere ein frommer Spruch aus Nahum 1,7: ‘Der Herr ist gütig und eine Feste zur Zeit der Not und kennt die, die auf ihn trauen.’<sup>25</sup> (Abb. 8.7) Uchtmann schrieb Gerhard zwei Jahre nach dem Treffen nochmals wegen eines gemeinsamen Studenten.<sup>26</sup>

Zwei Tage später ging Gerhard zu Jacobus Golius, der europäischen Autorität für das Arabische schlechthin.<sup>27</sup> Golius empfing ihn und stimmte auch zu, etwas in das Heft einzutragen. Er schrieb auf arabisch aus einem Hadith: ‘Alles außer Gott ist eitel’. Aber nicht nur der große Golius öffnete die Tür seines Hauses, auch der Sohn von dessen Lehrer Thomas Erpenius, nämlich Johann Erpenius.<sup>28</sup> Ludolf hatte ihn bereits einige Jahre zuvor kennengelernt und schrieb jetzt Gerhard von Stockholm aus, er werde sehen, was für ein gebildeter und

24 Vgl. F. Zarncke, ‘Der Priester Johannes’, *Abhandlungen der philologisch-historischen Classe der Koeniglichen Sächsichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, 7 (1879), S. 826–1028; 8 (1883), S. 1–183; C. Beckingham, *Prester John, the Mongols and the Ten Lost Tribes* (Aldershot, 1996). Allg. vgl. M. Mulsow und A. Ben-Tov, Hg., *Ludolf und Wansleben* (Druck in Vorbereitung).

25 Zu Uchtman (gest. 1680) vgl. S. Burnett, Hg., *Christian Hebraism in the Reformation Era (1500–1660)* (Leiden, 2012), S. 133.

26 Uchtman an Gerhard, 14.6.1652, FB Gotha, MS Chart A 138, fol. 38r-v.

27 Zu Golius (1596–1667) vgl. die in Anm. 13 genannten Werke, wie auch A. Hamilton, *The Arcadian Library: Western Appreciation of Arab and Islamic Civilization* (Oxford, 2011), passim.

28 Zu Thomas Erpenius, dem Vater, vgl. A. Vrolijk, ‘The Prince of Arabists and His Many Errors: Thomas’s Erpenius’s Image of Joseph Scaliger and the Edition of the *Proverbia Arabica*’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 73 (2010), S. 297–325.

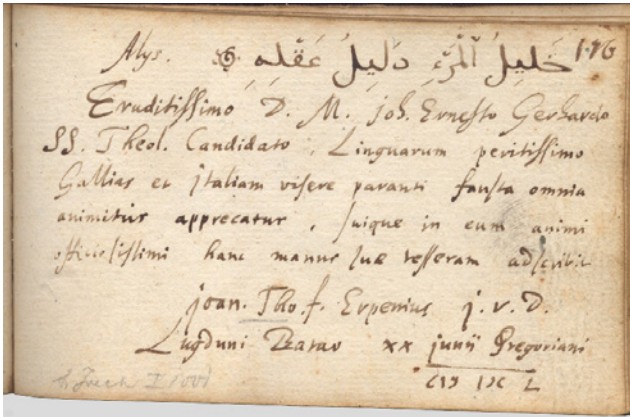


ABBILDUNG 8.8  
Eintrag Johann  
Erpenius



ABBILDUNG 8.9  
Eintrag Hadrianus  
Junius

bedeutender Mann das sei.<sup>29</sup> Erpenius bediente Gerhard auch auf arabisch, natürlich, aber mit einem etwas blumigeren, erotischeren Satz: 'Der Liebhaber der Frau, [dem wird sie] (Ver)Führer seines Verstandes'. (Abb. 8.8)

In der einen Woche, die Gerhard in Leiden verbrachte, traf er noch Thysius, Trigland, Heinsius, Boxhorn—ein volles Programm—und bei einem Abstecher nach Utrecht Matthias, Voetius, de Maets, Hoornbeek und Schurman. Die Besuche waren nur kurz, und in der Regel absolvierte Gerhard mehrere von ihnen an einem Tag.

Dann war nochmals Amsterdam an der Reihe, mit Etienne de Courcelles, dem Remonstranten am theologischen Seminar, und Hadrianus Junius (Abb. 8.9), einem Theologen und Namensvetter des älteren Philologen, bevor sich Gerhard in die spanischen Niederlande bewegte und von dort aus nach Paris.

<sup>29</sup> Ludolf an Gerhard, FB Gotha, MS Chart A 133.

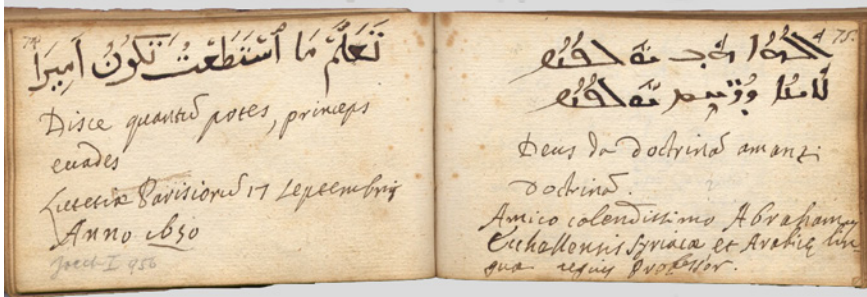


ABBILDUNG 8.10 Eintrag Abraham Echchelensis

In Paris trifft er am 17. und 18. September mit den Orientalisten Abraham Echchelensis und Gilbert Gaulmin zusammen.<sup>30</sup> Der syrische Maronit Echchelensis (eigentlich Ibrahim al-Haqilani) war 1645 von Rom nach Paris gekommen, um am Collège Royal zu lehren. Für Paris haben wir die Reisetagebücher, und deshalb wissen wir in diesem Fall nicht nur, was Echchelensis ins Stammbuch geschrieben hat—‘Lerne so viel Du kannst, und dadurch wirst Du zu einem Fürsten werden’ auf Arabisch, ein Hadith, und ‘Gott gibt Gelehrsamkeit jenen, die Gelehrsamkeit lieben’ auf Syrisch (Abb. 8.10)—sondern auch, worüber Gerhard mit ihm geredet hat. Da dieser 1649 in Wittenberg zum syrischen Neuen Testament gearbeitet hatte, spricht er mit Echchelensis über syrische Detailfragen. Berührungspunkte zwischen dem katholisch orientierten Maroniten und dem Lutheraner scheint es nicht gegeben zu haben. In Paris hat Gerhard übrigens Bücher aus der Bibliothèque Mazarine gekauft, die dort Doubletten waren, so etwa Petrus Paulus’ *Doctrina Christiana* in Armenisch.<sup>31</sup>

### 3 Orientalische Kirchen

Was ist geblieben von den Kontakten der Reise? Fast nichts. Von all den mehr als tausend Briefen, die Gerhard im Laufe seines Lebens bekommen hat, ist

<sup>30</sup> Zu Gaulmin (1585–1665) vgl. F. Secret, ‘Gilbert Gaulmin et l’histoire comparée des religions’, *Revue de l’histoire des religions*, 177 (1970), S. 35–63; M. Mulsow, ‘The Seventeenth Century Confronts the Gods: Bishop Huet, Moses and the Dangers of Comparison’, in M. Mulsow und A. Ben-Tov, Hg., *Knowledge and Profanation* (Leiden, 2019), S. 159–96; zu Echchelensis vgl. P.J.A. N. Rietberger, ‘A Maronite Mediator Between Seventeenth-Century Mediterranean Cultures: Ibrahim Al-Hakilani, or Abraham Meccellense (1605–1664) between Christendom and Islam’, *Lias*, 16 (1989), S. 13–41; B. Heyberger, Hg., *Orientalisme, science et controverse: Abraham Echchelensis (1605–1664)* (Turnhout, 2010).

<sup>31</sup> Vgl. FB Gotha, MS Chart B. 917, Einträge vom 2. bis 8. Sept.

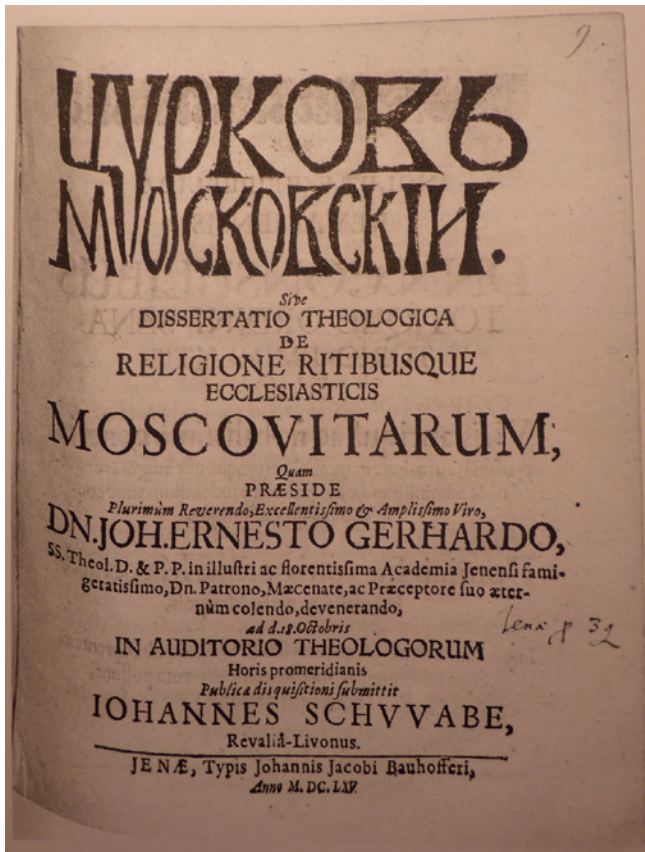


ABBILDUNG 8.11  
Johann Ernst  
Gerhard (praes.) /  
Johannes Schwabe  
(resp.), *Dissertatio  
theologica de  
religione ritibusque  
ecclesiasticis  
Moscovitarum*  
(Jena, 1665).

kaum einer aus den Kontakten der Holland- und Frankreichreise entstanden. Dennoch war die Reise keineswegs fruchtlos. Gerhard war voll von Anregungen, als er zurückkehrte, hatte seine Hefte voller Notizen und Exzerpte, und auch seine Sammlung von Objekten wuchs langsam. Doch zunächst machte Gerhard Karriere als Theologe: Er publiziert zur Evangelienharmonie und zu zahlreichen exegetischen und theologischen Einzelfragen. Erst Mitte der 1660er Jahre kommt er auf seine orientalistischen Interessen zurück. Und das mit zwei gleichzeitig verfolgten Publikationsreihen: In der ersten beleuchtet Gerhard die verschiedenen orientalischen Kirchen, in der zweiten geht es um die Religionen der Welt.<sup>32</sup>

Was die orientalischen Kirchen angeht, gab es auch hier die Idee einer 'Harmonia' oder Konkordanz, die vor allem von den Katholiken gepflegt wurde: die orientalischen Kirchen hätten allesamt eine Affinität zur katholischen Kirche.

<sup>32</sup> Vgl. ausführlicher Ben-Tov, *Practices of Oriental Studies*, Kap. 6.



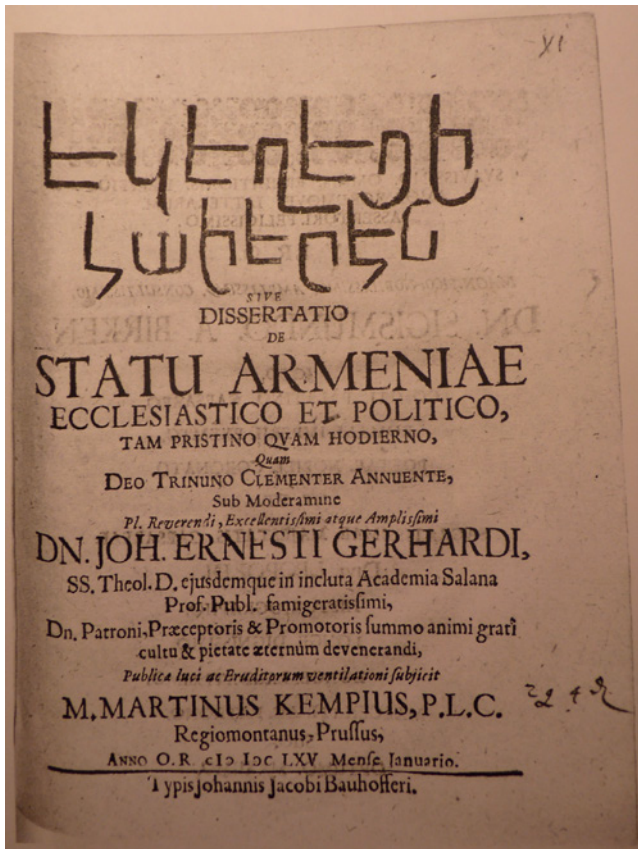


ABBILDUNG 8.12  
Johann Ernst  
Gerhard (praes.) /  
Martin Kempe  
(resp.), *Dissertatio de  
statu Armeniae  
ecclesiastico et  
politico* (Jena, 1665).

Gegen diese Version vom ‘consensus ecclesiarum orientalium’ hatten die Protestanten anzuschreiben—and das tat Gerhard mit einer Dissertation zur russisch-orthodoxen Kirche 1665 (Abb. 8.11), zur armenischen Kirche im gleichen Jahr (Abb. 8.12), zur koptischen Kirche 1666 (Abb. 8.13) und zur maronitischen Kirche 1668 (Abb. 8.14).<sup>33</sup> Auch die Beschäftigung mit dem äthiopischen Christentum, das in diese Reihe gehörte, nahm Gerhard wieder auf.<sup>34</sup>

33 Johann Ernst Gerhard (praes.) / Johannes Schwabe (resp.), *Dissertatio theologica de religione ritibusque ecclesiasticis Moscovitarum* (Jena, 1665); Johann Ernst Gerhard (praes.) / Martin Kempe (resp.), *Dissertatio de statu Armeniae ecclesiastico et politico* (Jena, 1665); Johann Ernst Gerhard (praes.) / Franz Wilhelm (resp.), *Exercitatio theologica, ecclesiae Copticae, hoc est Christianorum Aegyptiacae, ortum, progressum, praecipuaque doctrinae capita repraesentans* (Jena, 1666); Johann Ernst Gerhard (praes.) / Johann Georg Müller (resp.), *Disputatio de ecclesia Maronitarum* (Jena, 1668). Alle Dissertationen wurden von den Respondenten verfaßt, aber in enger Zusammenarbeit mit Gerhard.

34 Vgl. Johann Ernst Gerhard, ‘Miscellanea’, FB Gotha, MS Chart. B 917, fols. 157r–192v, hier fol. 16o zu äthiopischen Juden.

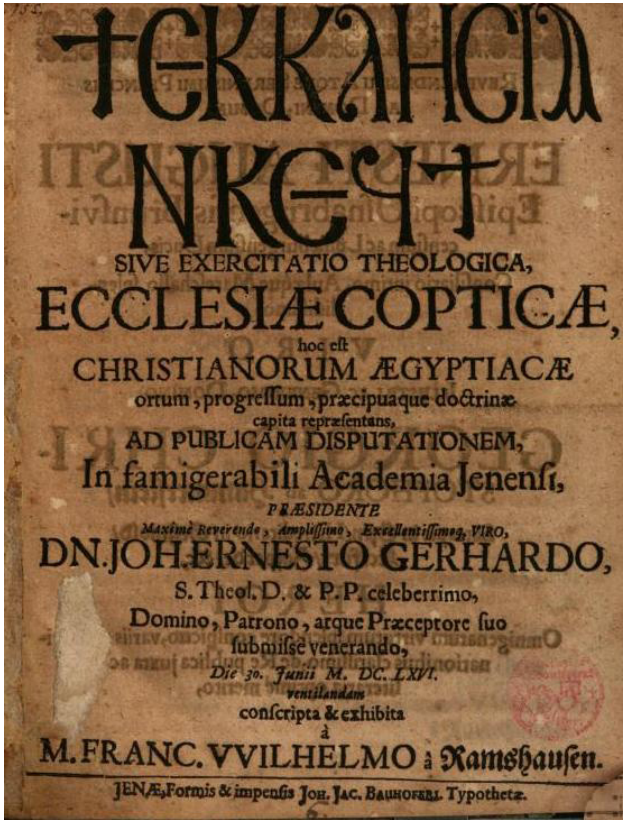


ABBILDUNG 8.13  
 Johann Ernst Gerhard  
 (praes.) / Franz  
 Wilhelm (resp.),  
*Exercitatio theologica,  
 ecclesiae Copticae,  
 hoc est Christianorum  
 Aegyptiacae, ortum,  
 progressum,  
 praecipuaque  
 doctrinae capita  
 repraesentans* (Jena,  
 1666).

Der Austausch mit Ludolf ging bis in diese Jahre weiter, auch wenn Ludolf inzwischen sehr viel skeptischer geworden war, was die Äthiopisch-Kompetenzen seines alten Freundes anging.<sup>35</sup> Seit sich Ludolf in Rom und dann in Gotha zusammen mit Abba Gorgoryos wirkliche Grundlagen der Sprache angeeignet hatte—nicht mehr nur welche aus zweiter Hand aufgrund der Potkensen Psalmen-Ausgabe—war er auf ein ganz anderes Niveau gekommen als das der rein akademischen Theologen-Orientalistik von ‘armchair travellers’. Gerhard hingegen ging es bei seiner Dissertationenserie auch ein wenig darum, Eindruck zu machen. Die Titelblätter der Werke sind eine Form von ‘conspicuous consumption’, von demonstrativem zur Schau Stellen der eigenen Kenntnisse und der Exotik der fremden Sprachen, indem sie die Schriftbilder des Armenischen, Russischen oder Koptischen ausstellten—ganz wie später der Hallenser Schriftenschrank.

35 Vgl. den Brief von Ludolf an Tentzel vom 7.11.1684, FB Gotha, MS Chart B 202, fol. 11–v.



ABBILDUNG 8.14  
 Johann Ernst  
 Gerhard (praes.)  
 / Johann Georg  
 Müller (resp.),  
*Disputatio de  
 ecclesia  
 Maronitarum*  
 (Jena, 1668).

#### 4 Das Projekt eines 'Scrutinium religionum'

Die zweite Dissertationenreihe, die Gerhard in diesen Jahren veröffentlichte, war noch ambitionierter, denn sie führte über den Kreis der orientalischen Kirchen hinaus, indem sie die Religionen der ganzen Welt zu traktieren sich bemühte. Es gab ein zeitgenössisches Stichwort für diese Bemühungen, und das hieß 'scrutinium religionum'. Der englische Gelehrte Edward Brerewood hatte 1614 ein Werk *Enquiries Touching the Diversities of Languages and Religions Through the Chief Parts of the World* geschrieben, und dieses Buch war 1650, als Gerhard in Holland war, von Jan Jonston unter dem Titel *Scrutinium religionum* auf Latein herausgebracht worden.<sup>36</sup> Das scheint einen großen Einfluß gehabt zu haben und fiel in den 1660er Jahren mit der Wirkung von Gerhard Johannes Vossius' großer *Theologia gentilis* zusammen, die 1668 endlich kom-

<sup>36</sup> Edward Brerewood, *Scrutinium religionum* (Frankfurt, 1650).

plett vorlag.<sup>37</sup> Daher läßt sich an lutherischen Zentren und Universitäten in dieser Zeit fast synchron eine Art frühe ‘Religionswissenschaft’ feststellen, bei der all die nichtchristlichen Glaubensformen nach christlichem Maßstab ‘geprüft’ werden. 1666 veröffentlichte der Regensburger Johann Heinrich Ursinus einen *Historisch-Theologischen Bericht vom Unterschied der Religionen*,<sup>38</sup> 1668 Andreas Sennert, Theologe in Wittenberg, Schüler von Gerhards Vater und Sohn des Mediziners Daniel Sennert, einen *Scrutinium religionum sive exercitatio theologico-historica de religionum orbis universarum varietate*,<sup>39</sup> im gleichen Jahr begann Hieronymus Kromayer in Leipzig eine Disputationen-Serie mit dem Titel *Scrutinium religionum tum falsarum tum unice verae*, die 1670 gesammelt publiziert wurde.<sup>40</sup> All das regte auch Gerhard an. Er verfaßte mit seinem Schüler Christian Hoffmann die Schrift *Consensus et dissensus religionum profanarum, Judaismi, Samaritanismi, Muhammedismi, Gingis-Chanismi, atque Paganismi ... cum Veritate Christiana*, in der auch gleich zu Beginn vom ‘scrutinium’ gesprochen wurde.<sup>41</sup> (Abb. 8.15) Genau genommen war es Hoffmann, der die Schrift ausformulierte, aber Gerhard hatte bei der Konzeption und in der Bereitstellung von Materialien und Einsichten großen Anteil. Er konnte sich nicht zurückhalten, auch hier wieder exotische Lettern im Buchtitel auszustellen, diesmal eine samaritanische Ausdrucksweise für ‘Schatten im Licht’. Auch das Vorläuferbüchlein zu dieser Schrift, das speziell den Islam behandelte—die Dissertation *Theologiae Muhammedanae brevis consideratio* von Gerhards Schüler Peter Holm aus dem Jahr 1664 (Abb. 8.16)—machte Gebrauch von diesem Stil, indem auf arabisch *Muhammad ar-rasūl al-kādīb*, also ‘Mohamed, der Lügenprophet’, vorgeschaltet war.<sup>42</sup>

Was ist die Idee hinter Gerhards und Hoffmanns rund zweihundertseitiger *Umbra in luce*? Was unterscheidet das Buch von populären Darstellungen der Weltreligionen à la Alexander Ross oder Abraham Rogerius, wie sie in deutscher Übersetzung in diesen Jahrzehnten in großen Auflagen zumeist in

37 Johann Gerhard Vossius, *Theologia gentilis et physiologia Christiana, sive De origine ac progressu idololatriae, deque naturae mirandis quibus homo adducitur ad Deum, libri IX* (Amsterdam, 1668).

38 Johann Heinrich Ursinus, *Historisch- und theologischer Bericht vom Unterschied der Religionen* (Nürnberg, 1663).

39 Andreas Sennert, *Scrutinium religionum sive exercitatio theologico-historica, de religionum orbis universi terrarum varietate in communi et in specie, quod una sola christiana, et praesertim evangelica sit vera et quam angusti illa hodie coercita sit terminis, &c.* (Wittenberg, 1668).

40 Hieronymus Kromayer, *Scrutinium religionum tum falsarum tum unice verae, Ita adornatum, ut singularum et historia et dogmata cum cura exponantur* (Leipzig, 1670).

41 Gerhard (praes.) / Hoffmann (resp. et auctor), *Umbra in luce*.

42 Peter Holm, *Theologiae muhammedanae brevis consideratio* (Jena, 1664).

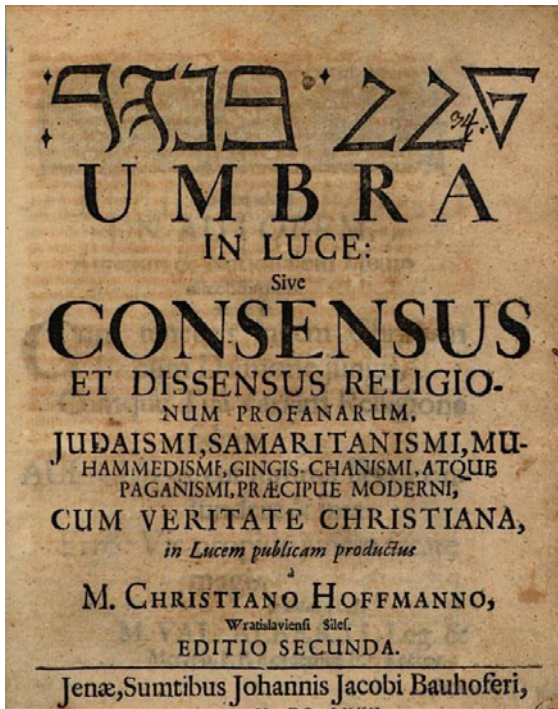


ABBILDUNG 8.15  
 Johann Ernst Gerhard (praes.) / Christian Hoffmann (resp. et auctor), *Umbra in luce, sive consensus et dissensus religionum profanarum, Judaismi, Samaritanismi, Muhammedismi, Gingis-Chanismi, atque paganismi* (Jena, 1667).



ABBILDUNG 8.16  
 Peter Holm, *Theologiae muhammedanae brevis consideratio* (Jena, 1664).



ABBILDUNG 8.17

'Javanischer Kobold', in Gerhard (praes.) / Hoffmann (resp. et auctor), *Umbra in luce*, Kap. II, § 22.

Nürnberg erschienen? Wie sind hier Bibelgelehrsamkeit, Orientalistik und Reiseberichte verwoben? Gerhard sieht die nichtchristlichen Religionen insofern als Schatten im Licht der Offenbarung, als sie die Wahrheit verdunkeln; aber in diesen Schatten gibt es immer auch wieder eine dunkle Form des Wahren zu entdecken—das meint Gerhard ebenso wie Vossius in der *Theologia gentilis*, wenn auch in etwas anderer Ausrichtung. Wichtig sei es, die wirren Lehren der anderen Völker an den Loci der christlichen Dogmatik zu messen, dann ist die Richtschnur gegeben, mit der sich die Vielfalt entwirren läßt—die Vielfalt, die bis zum 'Gingis Chanismus' reicht, eine Kategorie, die Gerhard von Hottinger übernimmt, der in seiner *Historia ecclesiastica* die mongolische Religion so genannt hatte.<sup>43</sup>

Es scheint mir interessant, daß Gerhard dabei immer wieder über eine rein philologische Behandlung hinausführt. Er verweist auf zahlreiche Objekte, etwa den javanischen Kobold, der ihm 1650 in Den Haag von Schelhammer geschenkt worden war. Dieser taucht im Kapitel über den Teufel und die Dämonen auf.<sup>44</sup> (Abb. 8.17) Gerhard hatte keine Ahnung, was diese Lederfigur, die er groß abbildete, in ihrem ursprünglichen Kontext bedeutete. Er wußte nicht,

43 Johann Heinrich Hottinger, *Historiae ecclesiasticae novi testament*, 9 Bde. (Zürich, 1651–1667).

44 Gerhard (praes.) / Hoffmann (resp. et auctor), *Umbra in luce*, Kap. II, § 22.



ABBILDUNG 8.18  
*Wayang kulit*, Javanische  
 Schattenspielfigur

daß es sich um eine Schattenspielfigur handelt, die auf Javanisch *Wayang kulit* heißt—damit eigentlich gut zum Thema *Umbra in luce* passend—und mit der die Geschichten aus den grossen Epen wie *Mahabharata* oder *Ramayana* gespielt wurden. (Abb. 8.18) Aber er mutmaßte, daß hier eine Art Zerrform des christlichen Teufels vorliegen müsse. Dabei läßt sich aufgrund der Gesichtszüge mit der spitzen Nase und den mandelförmigen Augen sowie der Feingliedrigkeit der Figur sagen, daß die Figur in Wirklichkeit einen Adligen oder Helden, jedenfalls einen ‘Guten’ dargestellt hat.<sup>45</sup>

Andere Objekte, die Gerhard heranzieht, waren vornehmlich Münzen. Er—und vielleicht auch schon sein Vater—hatten Münzen gesammelt, und in erster Linie talismanische Münzen, also in magischem Abwehrzauber benutzte Stücke. Die orientalistische Numismatik stand noch ganz am Anfang, es gab erst ganz wenige Abhandlungen über islamische, jüdische oder samaritanische Münzen. Hottinger war hier mit der *Dissertatio de nummis orientalibus* in den *Cippi hebraici* von 1662, die Gerhard zitiert, einer der Pioniere.<sup>46</sup> Gerhard stochert auch in diesem Fall oft im Dunklen, aber er zieht die Stücke heran, wenn es beispielsweise um Monotheismus-Aussagen geht: Auf einer Kupfermünze entziffert er ‘Der ewige Gott zeugt nicht und wird nicht gezeugt’, und ‘Sprich: Es ist der einzige Gott.’<sup>47</sup> (Abb. 8.19) Ihm war dabei wohl kaum klar, daß es sich um eine umayyadische Münze handelte, die wohl aus den Jahren nach 734 stammt und in Nordmesopotamien, Damaskus oder Baalbek geprägt wurde. Immerhin: Gerhard hielt diese Münze in Händen, wie auch

45 Ich danke Paola von Wyss-Giacosa für Informationen zu diesem Objekt.

46 Johann Heinrich Hottinger, *Cippi hebraici, sive Hebraeorum, tam veterum, prophetarum, patriarcharum; quam recentiorum, Tannaeorum, Amoraeorum* (Heidelberg, 1662).

47 Gerhard (praes.) / Hoffmann (resp. et auctor), *Umbra in luce*, Kap. II, § 15.



ABBILDUNG 8.19

Umayyadische Münze, nach 734 n. Chr., Nordmesopotamien, Damaskus oder Baalbek. Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, Orientalisches Münzkabinett, Inv. Nr. 307-A2.

eine Silbermünze mit der Aufschrift 'Es gibt keinen Gott außer Gott usw.', die wohl ein Dirham war, vermutlich aus den nordischen Funden der Wikingerzeit, vom späten 7. bis zum 10. Jahrhundert.<sup>48</sup>

Bei all diesen Durchgängen durch fremde Riten und Lehren zeigt sich: Es gibt Unterschiede von Schattierungen. Das läßt sich, so Gerhard, schon aus den Parallelen zur Optik sagen—and er zitiert einen Pliniuskommentar seines Jenenser Kollegen Erhard Weigel: manche Religionen wie eben der Islam sind weit weniger verdunkelt, andere mehr, vor allem dann, wenn sie grob idolatrisch sind.<sup>49</sup> Gerhard erwähnt eine phönizische Münze zu Beelzebub, über die auch Kircher spricht, und er ist stolz, Kirchers Auflistung von Talismanen mit Namensmagie mit einem Exemplar aus der eigenen Sammlung zu ergänzen, auf dem DABE DARE HABET HEBER HEBR zu lesen ist, wohl eine Form des Zachariassegens, der zu Pestzeiten angewandt wurde.<sup>50</sup> (Abb. 8.20) Wir besitzen das Verzeichnis von Gerhards 'Nomismatophylacium', also seiner Sammlung von talismanischen Münzen, schon aus der Zeit um 1650; also muß er früh angefangen haben, diese Objekte anzuschaffen oder die väterliche Kollektion zu ergänzen.<sup>51</sup>

48 Ich danke Stefan Heidemann für diese Informationen. Zur frühneuzeitlichen Gelehrsamkeit bezüglich orientalischer Münzen vgl. M. Mulsow, 'Numismatic Antiquarianism: Coins from the Ancient East in Early Modern Europe', in Francois de Callatay, Hg., *Numismatic Correspondences* (Druck in Vorbereitung).

49 Gerhard (praes.) / Hoffmann (resp. et auctor), *Umbra in luce*. Zur Optik der Schattierungen bei Sonnenfinsternissen vgl. Mulsow, 'An "Our father"'.  
50 Gerhard (praes.) / Hoffmann (resp. et auctor), *Umbra in luce*, Kap. 11, § 43. Zum Segen vgl. D. Wunderlin, *Mittel zum Heil. Religiöse Segens- und Schutzzeichen in der Sammlung Dr. Edmund Müller* (Beromünster, 2005); H.O. Münsterer, *Amulettkreuze und Kreuzamulette* (Regensburg, 1963); M. Brauneck, *Religiöse Volkskunst* (Köln, 1979), S. 295–6.

51 Vgl. FB Gotha, MS Chart. B 917.



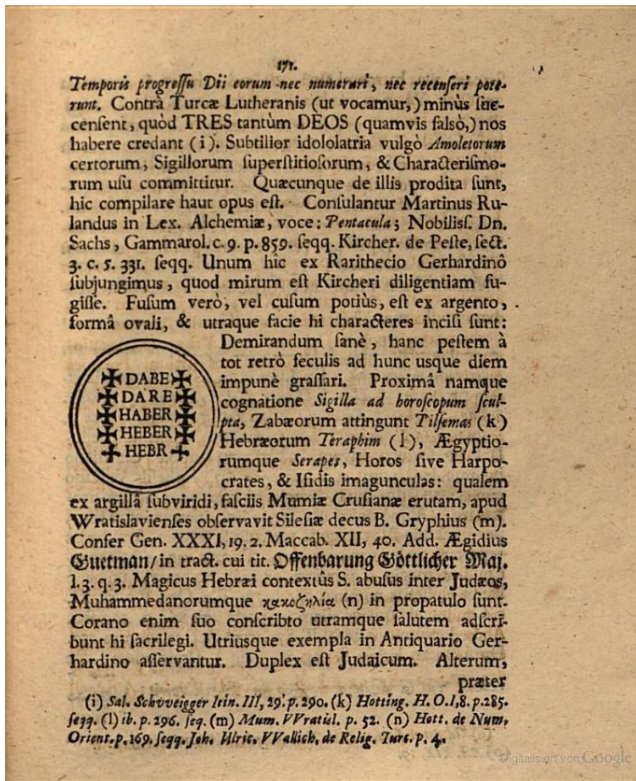


ABBILDUNG 8.20  
Gerhard (praes.) /  
Hoffmann (resp. et  
auctor), *Umbra in  
luce*, Kap. II, § 43.

Alles in allem ist der Eindruck, den ich von Gerhards Interessen und Denkweisen gegeben habe, noch fragmentarisch. Die Hollandreise gibt einen guten Einblick über die Stationen, an denen ein orientalistisch gebildeter Theologe halt machen konnte (nicht zuletzt: die Fülle an Stationen), und zusammen mit dem komplizierten System der Empfehlungen und Weiterempfehlungen ließe sich hier studieren, welche Netze von Beziehungen es gab; die Sentenzen, die im Stammbuch Gerhards landeten, sind nicht immer aussagekräftig, können aber zuweilen durchaus als Ausgangspunkt für eine tiefere Interpretation des Charakters ihrer Schreiber dienen. Daß Gerhards Kontakte (anders als die Ludolfs) am Ende nicht zu dauerhafteren Beziehungen wurden, ist ein Befund für sich: sagt er etwas aus über die Beziehungen zwischen Gelehrten in Holland und in Deutschland? Über eine mögliche Provinzialität der deutschen Orientalisten? Oder über die minderen Qualitäten Gerhards?<sup>52</sup> Schließlich hatten wir die synchronen Disputationsreihen zu fremden Religionen in

52 Antworten auf die genannten Fragen werden im Buch von Ben-Tov, *Practices of Oriental Studies*, gegeben, das verfaßt wurde, nachdem ich diesen Text geschrieben habe.

Leipzig, Jena und Wittenberg registriert. Warum diese Reihen gerade in den 1660er Jahren? Und warum der auffallende 'antiquarische' Einschlag in Gerhards Religionswissenschaft, die auch mit Objekten operiert? Ich denke, diese Ausweitung der Quellen ist durchaus typisch für die zweite Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts. Nur wissen wir noch wenig über professorale Kleinsammlungen, ebenso wie wir letztlich noch wenig über den Typus des theologisch institutionalisierten Orientalisten wissen.

### **Acknowledgement**

Dieser Text entstand ursprünglich 2012 und wurde auf einer Tagung in Utrecht vorgetragen.

## The Errant Eye: Johann Michael Wansleben and the Monasteries of Suhāg

*Nicholas Warner*

What do early travellers visiting an unfamiliar landscape choose to see and record for posterity? And why do they record some constituents of that landscape and not others? And how should we, at a considerable temporal remove, interpret what they impart of their experience? These questions, among others, have hovered in the background of many of the conversations held in Cairo over the years with the distinguished recipient of this *Festschrift*. The foreground, however, was always dominated by a mass of disparate data concerning the animals, vegetables and minerals of Egypt; the culinary, sexual and ritual habits (past and present) of its inhabitants; the topography and architecture of lost cities—not to mention the rich and often bizarre milieu of the ‘Republic of Letters’ in the early modern period. As one of the few scholars possessed of an almost fanatical desire to visit the great, until recently neglected, monastic churches of Suhāg in Upper Egypt, it is with pleasure that I dedicate to Alastair Hamilton this minor commentary on the passage of the first Westerner there almost 500 years ago: Johann Michael Wansleben.<sup>1</sup>

Writing accounts based on the experience of previous travellers was a descriptive technique often used by Europeans in the Arab world. It was certainly a technique familiar to Wansleben, who conveniently left a list of the Western sources to which he referred on the occasion of his first visit to Egypt in 1663–1665.<sup>2</sup> In the case of the monastic churches of Suhāg, however, there were simply no foreign precedents to cite. Wansleben was unusual, however, in having access to other, more local, sources of information that he had collected when hunting for manuscripts. One relevant text in his possession was the fifteenth-century chronicle of Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, the *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-ʿitibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, which contained an appendix of Christian sites in Egypt listing both the White and the Red Monasteries and their founders.<sup>3</sup> Another

1 For an account of Wansleben’s career, see A. Hamilton, *The Copts and the West 1439–1822* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 142–51; and A. Hamilton, *Johann Michael Wansleben’s Travels in the Levant, 1671–1674: An Annotated Edition of His Italian Report* (Leiden, 2018).

2 London, British Library, MS Add. 8780, fol. 87r.

3 Wansleben’s two-volume manuscript of the *Khiṭaṭ* is now Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter, BNF), MSS Arabes 1731 and 1732. The list is translated in an appendix to *The*

was the thirteenth-century description of the country's Coptic churches attributed to Abū Šāliḥ the Armenian: *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*. This text has subsequently been shown to be the last section of a now-dismembered manuscript composed by a Coptic priest from Alexandria, Abū 'l-Makārim, who died in 1208.<sup>4</sup> Only a month before arriving in Suhāg, Wansleben wrote to Pierre de Carcavy, the custodian of the French Royal Library, describing this work as 'a book of great importance for my history'.<sup>5</sup> Given such resources at his disposal, one might expect Wansleben to have made full use of them: an expectation that is not, as we shall see, borne out by his descriptions of the monasteries of Suhāg.

That Wansleben was aware of the monasteries even on his first visit to Egypt is clear, as he includes them in a list of churches he compiled at that time.<sup>6</sup> He was not to see them, however, until his second sojourn in Egypt between March 1672 and October 1673 when he was in the employ of Louis XIV's minister of finance, Jean-Baptiste Colbert. By a strange coincidence, this date corresponds exactly with the arrival in Egypt of the redoubtable Ottoman traveller Evliya Çelebi, who actually managed to reach Ethiopia—a long-time goal of Wansleben—without stopping at the monasteries.<sup>7</sup> The two men never met. The account of Wansleben's experiences at that time survives in various print and manuscript versions in a variety of languages, the most accessible being the French and English editions published shortly after Wansleben's return from the East.<sup>8</sup> Rather than rely on these texts, I have chosen to base my commentary on the surviving manuscript in Italian, partly to demonstrate the fundamental utility of the recently published critical edition of this manuscript, and partly because it contains lengthier descriptions of the White and Red

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*Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and Some Neighbouring Countries attributed to Abū Šāliḥ, the Armenian*, ed. and trans. B.T.A. Evetts (Oxford, 1895), with entries for the White and Red Monasteries on pp. 317–18, numbered 57 and 58 respectively.

- 4 For details, see U. Zanetti, 'Abu-l Makarim et Abu Salih', *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte*, 34 (1995), 85–138.
- 5 H.A. Omont, *Missions archéologiques françaises en Orient aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1902), 1: 118. Wansleben's manuscript of Abū Šāliḥ / Abū 'l-Makārim is now catalogued as BNF, MS Arabe 307.
- 6 Johann Michael Wansleben [Giovanni Michele Vanslebio], *Relazione dello stato presente dell'Egitto*, (Paris, 1671), p. 215.
- 7 Çelebi did, however, describe the nearby settlements of Tīmā, Tahta, and Suhāg in some detail. See R. Dankoff et al., *Ottoman Explorations of the Nile. Evliya Çelebi's 'Matchless Pearl These Reports of the Nile' Map and His Accounts of the Nile and the Horn of Africa in The Book of Travels* (London, 2018), pp. 212–14.
- 8 See Johann Michael Wansleben [Le P. Vansleb, R. D.], *Nouvelle relation, en forme de journal, d'un voyage fait en Égypte... en 1672 & 1673* (Paris, 1677) and Johann Michael Wansleben [F. Vansleb], *The Present State of Egypt; or, A New Relation of a Late Voyage into that Kingdom Performed in the Years 1672 and 1673* (London, 1678).

Monasteries than those found in print.<sup>9</sup> As well as purely physical detail, Wansleben's descriptions also contain references to various historical events alleged to have occurred there, which I will attempt to correlate to the physical realities of the surviving architecture at both sites.

## 1 The Gate of the Mule

At the White Monastery church, Wansleben recounts a story explaining why the main entrance to the church was known as the 'Gate of the Mule' (Bāb al-Baghl). He explains that this name was bestowed on the gate 'because on this spot, due to a curse of St Sennodio [sic], there fell to the ground the daughter of a pagan king together with the mule she was riding, who, thus mounted, wished to enter with contempt into the church and pass from there into the sanctuary'.<sup>10</sup> This is odd, for apart from the naming of the famous third abbot of the White Monastery, Shenoute / Sennodio / Sinuthius (also found in the texts of al-Maqrīzī and Abū 'l-Makārim), the story, even in its abbreviated form, diverges significantly from its 'canonical' representation elsewhere. Abū 'l-Makārim's account<sup>11</sup> describes the visit to the monastery, in the first half of the eighth century, made by the principal Umayyad tax collector, al-Qāsim ibn 'Ubaid Allah, in the following manner—the translation is that of Basil Evetts from Wansleben's own manuscript, now in the Bibliothèque nationale de France:

Now there was in this monastery an aged monk who was the superior of the monks. So the monks went forth to meet Al-Kasim and brought him into the monastery, together with the odalisque who was with him; and they passed through the first door, and through the second which leads into the enclosure of the church; and they went as far as the door which forms the entrance into the church, still riding upon their horses. But as they were about to enter into the church, this old man, the superior of the monastery, cried out, saying: 'Alight [from thy horse], O emir, and enter

9 Hamilton, *Wansleben's Travels*, pp. 357–62, for Wansleben's descriptions of the two monasteries.

10 Johann Michael Wansleben, BNF, MS italien 435, fol. 155r. Translations from the Italian are mine.

11 Itself derived from the account in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, for which see C.F. Seybold, *Alexandrinische Patriarchengeschichte von S. Marcus bis Michael I., 61-767: nach der ältesten 1266 geschriebenen Hamburger Handschrift* (Hamburg, 1912), p. 204; M.N. Swanson, 'An Eclipsed History: Toward a Framework for the Medieval History of the Red Monastery', in *The Red Monastery Church: Beauty and Asceticism in Upper Egypt*, ed. E.S. Bolman (New Haven, 2016), pp. 193–202; 196.

not with such pride into the house of God, above all in the company of this woman; for never from the beginning has any woman entered into this church! I fear for this woman therefore, if she shall enter into this church!' But the emir paid no heed to the words [of the old man], but entered on horseback, together with his odalisque and the soldiers who were with him. So when he came to the middle of the church, his horse plunged with him, and he fell to the ground; and through his fall the horse which the woman was riding also plunged, so that she fell to the ground and died on the spot; and the horse that was under her died also. And as for Al-Kasim, the aforesaid governor, there descended upon him the spirit of an unclean devil, which buffeted him, so that he foamed at the mouth, and his teeth gnashed like the tusks of a wild boar. But when he had recovered a little, he understood the evil that he had done, and repented of his rashness, and that he had not listened to the bidding of the aged superior. Then he called the superior and said to him: 'To-day I have sinned, because I did not listen to the counsel which thou didst address to me. But now the mysteries of this place have been manifested to me so that I do not doubt them. I desire therefore, O shaikh, that thou shouldest accept this gift of money, and pray for me that God may forgive me, and may not deal with me as I deserve, because I ventured into the house of God, and entered it riding on horseback together with my companions.' Then the aged monk consoled him, and would not accept anything from him; but the emir adjured him and forced him, and showed humility towards him, and at last induced him to take four hundred dinars, saying: 'I ask God to pardon thee, O shaikh, that thou mayest ask him to pardon me this sin which broke from me.'<sup>12</sup>

It would seem that in reporting this legend, Wansleben relied directly on local informants rather than the manuscript of Abū 'l-Makārim in his possession. His guide to the monasteries, a Hawara Bedouin,<sup>13</sup> may not have been a source of much information, but there must have been at least a few priests (if not monks) still officiating at the church since Wansleben notes that he attended a mass there on the Sunday after he arrived. The text of Abū 'l-Makārim contains no reference to the mule that gave its name to the gate, although the substitution of a mule for a horse would seem to reflect the long-standing belief among Europeans that women in Egypt only rode mules, while men alone rode horses.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, pp. 237–8.

<sup>13</sup> Wansleben, BNF, MS italien 435, fol. 114v.; Vansleb, *Nouvelle Relation*, p. 370.

<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., Guillaume Postel's 16th-century gloss on the subject of women riding asses in N. Warner, *The True Description of Cairo*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2006), 2: 151.

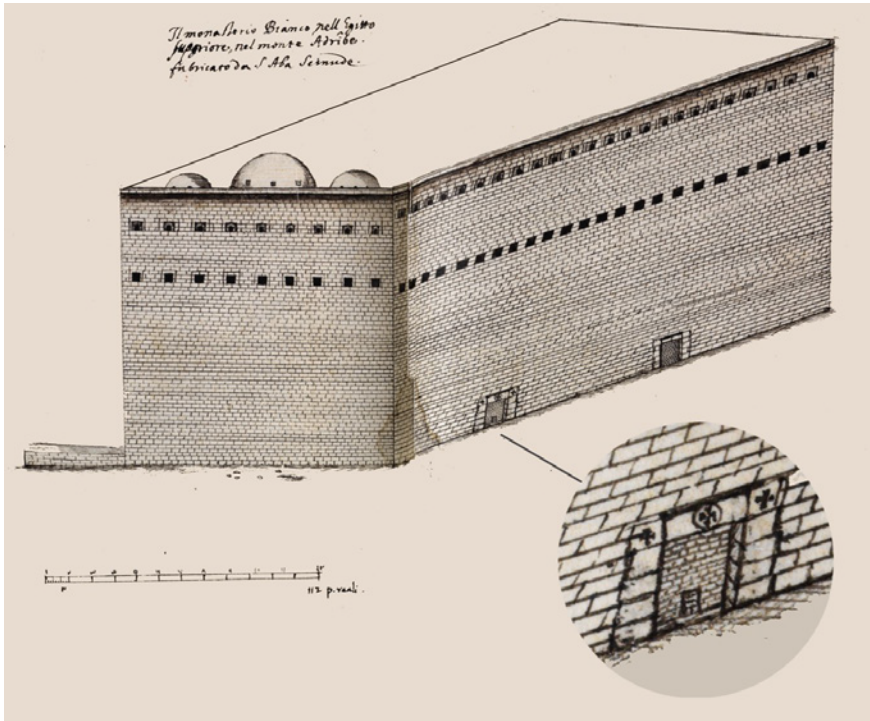


FIGURE 9.1 Johann Michael Wansleben, pen and ink drawing of the White Monastery church, 1673, with enlargement of the putative 'Gate of the Mule' (extract from BNF, MS italien 435, fols. 116v–117r, digitally manipulated by author)

Wansleben identifies the 'Gate of the Mule' as the primary entrance to the church (the other doors being walled up) and further states that three crosses were carved on its granite lintel.<sup>15</sup> A doorway that approximates to this description is also represented in a drawing of the church contained in his manuscript, discussed in detail below (Fig. 9.1). This doorway is the eastern of the two doors in the north façade that he shows in this drawing. Examination of all extant doors in the perimeter wall of the building today, however, reveals only one entrance that spatially corresponds to Wansleben's description: the western, or central, doorway in the north wall (Fig. 9.2: W1).<sup>16</sup> The present main entrance to the church is from the south; but could it have been from the north

15 The French and English printed descriptions add that the central cross was larger than those to the sides; see Vansleb, *Nouvelle Relation*, p. 343; Vansleb, *The Present State of Egypt*, p. 224. Though different in design, the central cross is not, in fact, any larger than those that flank it.

16 For illustrations, see W. de Bock, *Matériaux pour servir à l'archéologie de l'Égypte chrétienne* (St Petersburg, 1901), p. 48, fig. 59; U. Monneret de Villard, *Les couvents près de Sohâg (Deyr el-Abiad et Deyr el-Ahmar)*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1925–1926), 1: fig. 10 and 2: plate 145.

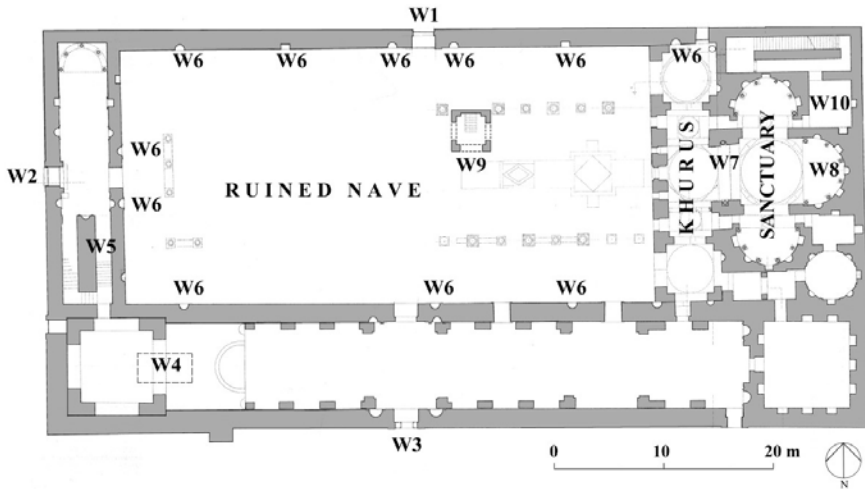


FIGURE 9.2 Annotated plan of the White Monastery church (after a survey by Darmstadt Technical Hochschule, 1962)

in Wansleben's time? The answer must be equivocal, not least because the plan of the church has a narthex at its west end, as well as a lateral hall on its south side, which were clearly both designed as transitional spaces with independent entrances (Fig. 9.2: W2 and W3) that had to be crossed before entering the nave. The north entrance, by contrast, connects directly to the nave. The text of Abū 'l-Makārim, quoted above, also indicates that the transgressor of the sanctity of the church, al- Qāsim, rode first through one door and then another before reaching the entrance to the sanctuary where he was struck down.<sup>17</sup> There is thus no certainty about which of the doors in the exterior wall of the church was the 'Gate of the Mule', and sadly it no longer forms a part of the monastery's oral history. The northern entrance identified by Wansleben, however, is the least likely candidate for the title.

## 2 The Well of Christ

When at the White Monastery, Wansleben was shown a large and deep well inside the church's enclosure wall, the water from which was blessed, he was

<sup>17</sup> For an exhaustive discussion of this point, see C.R. Peers, 'The White Monastery near Sohag', *The Archaeological Journal*, 61 (1904), 131–53; 138.



told, by Christ.<sup>18</sup> Once again, Wansleben relied on local informants rather than the text of Abū 'l-Makārim in his possession, which does not include the White Monastery in the list of sites credited with a visit by the Holy Family in their peregrination through Egypt.<sup>19</sup> The trope of a water source blessed by the Infant Jesus, however, is a common one in both Coptic literature and oral tradition. Perhaps the most famous example is from Māṭariyya in Heliopolis, where Christ caused a spring to arise from an impression of his heel in the ground.<sup>20</sup> In Upper Egypt, Abū 'l-Makārim's list does provide one direct parallel to the legend of Christ blessing water from a well at the monastery of Muḥarraḡ, not far from Asyūṭ.

Opposite the door of the church there is a well of running water... . After [his stay here], our Lord Christ blessed the water of the aforesaid well, because he and his mother and their companions had drunk of it; so that every one who went to it in faith, and drank of it or bathed in it, was healed of his pains; and many were cured of their diseases.<sup>21</sup>

In this context it should be noted that Wansleben himself stayed at a dependency of the monastery of Muḥarraḡ, which he called the 'Monastery of the Abyssinians' or the monastery of St. Peter and Paul, for a period of two months on his first visit to Egypt in 1664 when he was learning Arabic and so would presumably have been acquainted with the legend.<sup>22</sup>

As a result of Christ's blessing, the well at the White Monastery church had another remarkable characteristic described by Wansleben. The water within it rose and fell in correspondence to the fluctuating level of the Nile, although it had no apparent physical connection to the river. As the monastery was built immediately next to the edge of the Nile flood plain, it is a hydraulic fact that the level of the ground water in the well would have risen with the level of the river when in flood.<sup>23</sup> Fifty-eight years later another visitor to the church, the French naturalist Claude Granger, was told that this miracle was owed not to

18 Wansleben, BNF, MS italien 435, fol. 155r.

19 See Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, pp. 217–27.

20 For the *mirabilia* of Māṭariyya, including the sacred well, see U. Zanetti, 'Matarieh, La Sainte Famille, et Les Baumiers', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 3 (1993), 21–68; S.J. Davis, 'Ancient Sources for the Coptic Tradition', in *Be Thou There. The Holy Family's Journey in Egypt*, ed. G. Gabra (Cairo, 2001), pp. 133–62, esp. p.151–2.

21 Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, pp. 226–7.

22 Vanslebio, *Relazione*, p.160 and 193.

23 For a photograph of the Nile floodwaters reaching the monastery, see H.-G. Evers and R. Romero, 'Rotes und Weisses Kloster bei Suhag. Probleme der Rekonstruktion', in *Christentum am Nil*, ed. K. Wessel (Recklinghausen, 1964), fig. 75.

Christ, but rather to one 'Dioscorus' (without specifying which of many possible contenders this might have been), thereby demonstrating the fluid nature of certain myths.<sup>24</sup> Wansleben's description also has resonance with another well at the monastery of Bisus / Jesus near Bahnasa that is included on Abū 'l-Makārim's list of sites associated with the Holy Family:

In the monastery there is a church, in the middle of which there is a well of running water. Over this well prayers are said during the rise of the Nile every year; and then the water in the well rises. In the well there are marks contrived, which show the number of cubits reached by the rise of the Nile; and when the water of the well rises and stands still at a certain mark, it is known thereby what height the rise of the Nile will reach.<sup>25</sup>

Excepting the influence of prayer, this is a very passable description of a traditional ancient Egyptian nilometer that would have been a constituent of many major temples throughout the country. It is likely that many such installations for measuring the rise of the Nile remained operational during the late antique period, and there is a tradition that Copts were responsible for maintaining and reading them well into the Islamic period.<sup>26</sup> They are also represented in Coptic textiles.<sup>27</sup> A similar method of measurement was used in the Islamic period nilometer on the southern tip of Rawda island in Cairo, the *miqyas*, with which Wansleben was also familiar.<sup>28</sup> In the case of the well at the White Monastery church, he seems to have preferred a spiritual rather than a physical explanation for the rise and fall of the water within it and may have been unaware of the river's extreme proximity during the annual flood in the months of September and October.

There is indeed a well, or cistern, inside the White Monastery church in the southwest corner of the building that is partially covered by a large dome (Fig. 9.2: W4). Little is known of this cistern, which is largely hidden from view today; but it is built of brick lined with plaster and occupies an area of

24 Claude Granger, *Relation du voyage fait en Egypte par le Sieur Granger en l'année 1730 où l'on voit ce qu'il y a de plus remarquable, particulièrement sur l'histoire naturelle* (Paris, 1745), pp. 92–6.

25 Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, pp. 219–20.

26 See W. Popper, *The Cairo Nilometer. Studies in Ibn Taghrî Birdî's Chronicles of Egypt: I* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1952), pp. 2, 20, 25, 66, 68, 111.

27 For representations, see D. Bonneau, 'Nilometer', in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 8 vols. (New York, 1991), 6: 1794–5; D. Bonneau, 'Le Nilomètre: aspect architectural', *Archeologia*, 27 (1976), 1–11; P. du Bourguet, *Musée Nationale du Louvre. Catalogue des étoffes coptes*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1964), 1: no. D36/57, 132–3.

28 Wansleben, BNF, MS italien 435, fol. 72r.

approximately three by four metres in plan with a depth of at least 12.5 metres.<sup>29</sup> A large arch bisects the plan on its short (north-south) axis, which probably provided the support for an animal-powered waterwheel. The cistern may have been physically connected by a water channel to the large exedra that occupies the west end of the south hall that stands between the south wall of the church and the south wall of the nave. A water pipe has also been observed outside the south wall of the church leading to monastic dependencies in this area.<sup>30</sup> Although the cistern may well be part of the ancient foundation of the church, the dome that stands above it is more recent. It is hard to guess its date, however, because the south wall of the church at its western end was substantially rebuilt in the early nineteenth century during the reign of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha. This reconstruction of the south wall may also have included the dome, but equally may have abutted the masonry of an existing dome (perhaps the one seen by Wansleben) that remained standing during the works as an independent structural unit with no connection to the masonry of the walls to the south and west. The four pointed arches that support the dome can be attributed stylistically to as early as the medieval period. The present dome has no oculus, unlike that described by Wansleben, which he compared rather grandiosely to the Pantheon in Rome.

### 3 The Tower of St Helena and the Club of Pshoi

In his account of the Red Monastery, Wansleben includes two further legends that can be considered part of the foundational mythology of the monastery. His informants on this point were the monks (*monaci*) and the prior (*priore*) of the church. Although it is possible that he may have mistaken (like many travellers who followed him) lay priests for monks, and it is furthermore doubtful whether the monastery was still functioning *per se* at the time of his visit, Wansleben seems to have been well aware of clerical distinctions in the Coptic church.<sup>31</sup>

29 As measured in April 2019 by Pietro Gasparri using a laser scanner.

30 Gillian Pyke, personal communication, April 2018. For the various industrial installations of the White Monastery surrounding the church, see L. Blanke, *An Archaeology of Egyptian Monasticism: Settlement, Economy and Daily Life of the White Monastery Federation* (New Haven, 2019), chapter 3.

31 See the chapter entitled 'Relazione dello stato ecclesiastico dei Copti', in Vanslebio, *Relazione*, pp. 130–221, esp. 191–7, for his description of monastic life.

The first legend attributes the founding of the tower, or keep, that is located immediately to the south of the church to St Helena.<sup>32</sup> The mother of Constantine is said to have passed by on her way to revere the Holy Martyrs of the Church at Esna and constructed the keep around a pre-existing well outside the south perimeter wall of the church with the intention of protecting the church's water supply from marauding Bedouins. St Helena is, to this day, still credited with the construction of the keep despite a manifest discrepancy in dating and the fact that she is not thought to have visited the Nile Valley on her tour to Palestine in search of relics in A.D. 326–328. St Helena also appears in the mythology of the White Monastery: in 1737 the English cleric and antiquarian, Richard Pococke, described seeing eagles among the carved stone elements of the church that he associated with the saint.<sup>33</sup> At least one such eagle can be found in the surviving internal decoration of a niche hood in the church, though this bird certainly has other possible interpretations in an early Christian context.<sup>34</sup>

Remarkably, Wansleben includes in his manuscript a tiny sketch plan of the Red Monastery that clearly shows the relationship between the church, drawn as a rectangle, with a small square representing the keep on its southern flank (Fig. 9.3).<sup>35</sup> It is the first known drawing of the site, despite its miniscule scale. Conservation work that was executed by the author at the keep between 2015 and 2017 has allowed a better appreciation of this major building to emerge. It has, at its centre, a circular brick-lined well, one and a half metres in diameter, and in a room to the south of the well a 1.5 metre square brick water tank with a limestone border.<sup>36</sup> There is no doubt that the keep was constructed in the medieval period, probably in the late thirteenth century.<sup>37</sup> The well and the water tank may well be earlier vestiges that were enclosed by this construction, much as the legend indicates if one ignores the chronology it proposes. Wansleben may have seen either, or both, features on his visit although the tank has a more visible presence.

32 Wansleben had earlier attributed the construction of the White Monastery to St Helena; see Wanslebio, *Relazione*, p. 215.

33 Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East, and Some Other Countries*. 2 vols. (London, 1743), 1: 79.

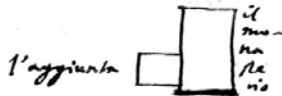
34 See P. Akermann, *Le décor sculpté du couvent blanc. Niches et frises* (Cairo, 1976), p. 82, niche number 32.

35 Wansleben, BNF, MS italien 435, fol. 118r.

36 For details of this and other archaeological features of the keep, see N. Warner, 'Technical Report on Architectural Conservation, Red Monastery, Spring 2016. Part 11: The Tower', *Internal Report for the American Research Center in Egypt* (April 2016), 42–5.

37 See N. Warner, 'Architectural Survey', in *The Red Monastery Church: Beauty and Asceticism in Upper Egypt*, ed. E.S. Bolman (New Haven, 2016), pp. 54–5 and 77.

quali è stato fabricato, si chia<sup>ma</sup> ~~ma~~ quell'altro si chiama bianco, per cau-  
 sa delle trauestime bianche, dalle quali è fabricato. Tutti li due mona-  
 steri sono fatti <sup>quasi</sup> nella stessa forma, e maniera, ~~salvo~~ che questo è un  
 poco più picciolo del bianco, et ha anche una aggiunta verso il sud, la qua-  
 le dicono li Monaci haverla fatta S. Elena, quando andaua à Isna, per  
 riuenire li S. martiri, che un' sono stati martirizzati. affine di serrare il  
 poro del monasterio, il quale staua fuori del monasterio, dentro nel ricin-  
 to del monasterio, accio chi li Arabi, quando uisessero dalle loro defecti, non  
 li potessero leuare l'acqua: ecco l'aggiunta che S. Elena ha fatto



Le colonne della nave della chiesa sono uguali: l'una all'altra in grandezza,  
 e grossezza, e più belle di quelle del monasterio bianco, la scaltura anche  
 delle capitelli mi parua assai più regnosa, di quella dell' <sup>altre</sup> colonne nel mo-  
 nasterio bianco.

Il fondatore di questo monasterio è stato Anba Biseoi, del quale il priore  
 mi contaua che era stato un ladro, ma che alla fine si era conuertito, ed i-  
 uentato un homo di gran santità. altri mi diceuano parimente, che la sua  
 mazza, con la quale era stato solito ad amallare la gente, stia attacca-  
 ta nel coro della chiesa. ma mentre che non ne hebbi notizia, allora quando  
 uici stetti, non potei nè anche curare di uederla.

FIGURE 9.3 Johann Michael Wansleben's sketch plan of the Red Monastery. BNF, MS italien 435, fol. 118r (partial), COURTESY BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE.

The second legend of the Red Monastery has no architectural ramifications. It concerns the tale that a club, with which the founder of the monastery Anba Pshoi was wont to attack his victims before his conversion to holiness, was hanging up in the sanctuary of the church. The identification of the saintly founder of the monastery as a former bandit made good is patently a mistake, however, either on the part of Wansleben's informants or himself. The story would instead seem to relate to Moses the Black, a desert father in the Wadi Natrun whose curriculum vitae is a close match to that given here for Pshoi.<sup>38</sup> Although Wansleben did visit the Wadi Natrun, it appears he did not encounter any physical or anecdotal traces of Moses there.<sup>39</sup>

38 For a biography of Moses the Black, see *The Coptic Synaxarium* (Chicago, 1995), pp. 401–3.

39 Wansleben, BNF, MS italien 435, fol. 59v.

#### 4 Physical Descriptions

In addition to recording legends, Wansleben provides much more detailed physical information related to the monastic churches. This information is all the more remarkable for having been assembled in the very short time he was on site: he arrived at the White Monastery in the evening of Saturday 18 March, spent the night there and proceeded to the Red Monastery, one hour's ride away, the following day after mass. He left the monastery after lunch the same day. It is perhaps as a direct result of this tight schedule that his account of the White Monastery church, which he also recorded in an ambitious drawing, discussed below, is considerably more detailed than that of the Red Monastery.

Wansleben describes, in his text, Shenoute's church as standing beside the ruined city of Atribe and, in his drawing, as below the 'Mountain of Atripe'—the escarpment of the Western desert. Abū 'l-Makārim employs the name 'Atribe' in his work, though it may well have still been in use by local inhabitants at the time of Wansleben's visit.<sup>40</sup> The city of Atribe / Atripe / Athribis is generally believed to be centred upon the ruined late period temple of the goddess Repit some six kilometres to the south of the church. Part of this temple was re-used by a large nunnery that was a constituent of Shenoute's federation of monasteries in the region. As a very large area of collapsed buildings strewn with potsherds surrounded the White Monastery at the time of Wansleben's visit (also shown in his drawing), which survived up to the early twentieth century (Fig. 9.4), it would have been entirely natural to assume these to be the remains of the city of Atripe rather than the monastery itself. Moreover, Wansleben was astute enough in his account to name this ruined site as a point of origin for much of the spolia used in the construction of both monastic churches.

The church of the White Monastery contains possibly the largest assemblage of Pharaonic and Roman spolia in any church in Egypt, most of which is still visible.<sup>41</sup> Aside from column shafts and capitals, stone relief blocks with hieroglyphic texts and the outlines of pagan gods and men were placed in the walls, floor, and ceilings of the church. This phenomenon, together with adoption of certain ancient Egyptian architectural forms, is of particular interest given Shenoute's recorded abhorrence of pagan practices. As Wansleben noted, these spolia were often positioned upside down—whether by accident or design. One location that is particularly richly endowed with such decorated blocks is the west staircase of the church (Fig. 9.2: W5)—'a magnificent work,

40 Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, p. 237 and n. 3.

41 D. Klotz, 'Triphis in the White Monastery: reused temple blocks from Sohag', *Ancient Society*, 40 (2010), 197–213.



FIGURE 9.4 View of White Monastery from the southeast with ruin field and 'Mountain of Atripe' to left

PHOTO CIRCA 1908 COURTESY ISTITUTO NAZIONALE DI ARCHEOLOGIA E STORIA DELL'ARTE, MONNERET DE VILLARD ARCHIVE, 66725)

although dark and today destroyed'—which Wansleben considered to be the main staircase that led up to monastic cells on the first floor. Pococke also commented on the presence of monastic quarters on the south side of the church.<sup>42</sup> Whether these observations are conjectural, or whether this part of the building was still standing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, cannot be confirmed.

When describing the White Monastery church, Wansleben adopted a standard practice shared by both Western and Arab chroniclers: the generation of an impression of precision and trustworthiness through the recitation of statistics. He registered the number of doors (6) and windows (144 in two rows)<sup>43</sup> in the perimeter wall, the columns in the nave (14 on each side), the overall dimensions (111 × 224 feet) and the detailed block sizes of the building (*ad nauseam*). These numbers are often surprisingly accurate. There are, in fact, six doors in the perimeter wall, although these are broken down into three major and three minor doors; there are (or rather were, allowing for losses and rebuilding) about 140 windows. The plan of the church does have proportions very close to a ratio of two to one. The columns in the nave number 18 rather than 14 on each side, but they may have been difficult to distinguish at the time of his visit.

Such a methodology is certainly one way of conveying the qualities of an object, and an enumeration of the materials used in its creation is another. Red

42 Pococke, *A Description of the East*, p. 79 and plate 71.

43 Wansleben includes a tiny sketch within the text of his manuscript giving an idea of the appearance of a typical example from the uppermost row of fenestration, reproduced in Hamilton, *Wansleben's Travels*, p. 358.

granite, white marble and travertine (meaning limestone) are mentioned by Wansleben as the building materials at the White Monastery church, as are the red bricks used to build the Red Monastery church. The very significant re-use of spolia with Pharaonic relief carving is highlighted in the perimeter walls, nave floor, and western staircase (the '*scala maestra*') of the White Monastery church. Wansleben also made a pointed comparison of the columns and capitals seen in both churches. He rightly observed these to be random and mismatched in the case of the White Monastery church, where 'plaster and stones' were added to achieve a more uniform appearance, but quite regular in size and thickness in the case of the Red Monastery church, and with more finely carved capitals. This is an observation of value because it highlights one of the major differences between the two churches: the fact that all the capitals in the Red Monastery church were purpose-made rather than derived from other buildings. It does not, however, correspond in other respects to the situation on the ground.

Recent excavations in the nave and outside the Red Monastery church have revealed a motley collection of damaged column shafts and shaft fragments in red and grey granite of different thicknesses, some of which have evidence of being plastered. These columns were re-assembled, where possible, on new bases in the nave from 2014 to 2016.<sup>44</sup> Regarding the columns in the naves of both churches, Wansleben remarks that they were still standing when he saw them. This requires a great leap of faith on the part of the reader: the columns must surely have fallen with any collapse of the roofs of the churches, and once fallen would have required a major effort to re-erect. The only alternative hypothesis is that the timber used in the roofs and galleries of both churches was deliberately harvested for re-use, leaving the columns *in situ*. In the case of the lost roof of the White Monastery church Wansleben even specified its construction with the Arabic word 'giamelún', or rather 'gamalún', signifying a pitched roof.

The presence of high-quality carved stone elements in both churches also attracted Wansleben's eye. In the White Monastery church, he noted six arched niches on the walls to either side of the nave of the church 'like those in Roman palaces' displaying 'a carving of leaves so beautiful that I was left amazed'. The niches are, indeed, masterpieces of early-Christian stone carving although greatly damaged today.<sup>45</sup> In fact, there are considerably more than six niches

44 For reconstruction drawings of the nave of the Red Monastery church see N. Warner, 'The Architecture of the Red Monastery Church (Dayr Anbā Bišūy) in Egypt: An Evolving Anatomy', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 70 (2016), 59-116; figs. 13 and 17.

45 For details of the sculptural decoration of the church, see Akermann, *Le décor sculpté*.



with carved hoods in the nave, so it is hard to ascertain which of them our traveller may have seen (Fig. 9.2: W6). He also described a 'perfectly carved' white marble cornice half way up the nave walls. This must be a reference to the small cornice with slit modillions that still survives in places below the line of the original gallery of the church, albeit made of limestone rather than white marble.

## 5 A Visual Record

It is known that during his second visit to Egypt Wansleben retained the services of two draftsmen to provide him with drawings of sites and objects he thought remarkable. One was a Greek artist named Onorato Leonardo Iatrò, and the other a Coptic priest and copyist of manuscripts named Abū 'l-Mīna.<sup>46</sup> The church of the White Monastery provided one of the subjects of these illustrations in his manuscript in the Bibliothèque nationale de France,<sup>47</sup> but it would seem that on this occasion Wansleben executed the drawing himself from sketches he must have made on site. This is the earliest visual record of the church that exists and, as such, deserves detailed analysis (Fig. 9.1). It is entitled 'The White Monastery in Upper Egypt on the mountain of Adribe built by St Aba Sennude [sic]' and shows the church in an oblique isometric view from the northeast with the desert escarpment rising behind the building to the west. Shadows, which would have given the rendering some depth, are absent. A drawn scale is provided, however, which has its divisions marked off in arabic numerals. Whether this was a conceit on Wansleben's part is hard to determine: there are no drawn scales on any of the other architectural drawings that illustrate this manuscript.

A substantial group of destroyed buildings, probably representing the city of Atriye in Wansleben's eyes, is shown to the south of the church in the position of what, until the beginning of the twentieth century, was an extensive ruin field (Fig. 9.4). The coursing of the stone blocks used in the construction of the church's perimeter wall, the domes over the sanctuary that formed part of the medieval reconstruction of the church, the windows in the north and east façades, and the doors on the north façade are all clearly represented. The door closest to the viewer is shown with three carved crosses on its lintel

46 See M. Martin, 'Le journal de Vansleb en Égypte', *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*, 97 (1997), 181–91.

47 Wansleben, BNF, MS italien 435, fols. 116v.–117r., 41.1 × 30.2 cm. The drawing is reproduced in its totality in Martin, 'Le Journal de Vansleb en Égypte', fig. 9 and in Hamilton, *Wansleben's Travels*, fig. 13.

corresponding to Wansleben's verbal description of the 'Gate of the Mule'. The building is shown with what may be interpreted as a flat roof, contradicting Wansleben's remark that it was unroofed but was once covered by a pitched roof. It is possible, however, that the rendering of the ruined interior from this angle would have been too complex or that the drawing was left unfinished. The distinctive limestone, lion-headed, rainwater spouts that survive on the façades are also omitted. Wansleben himself was conscious of other deficiencies in the drawing, as is clear from an annotation he made in the right hand corner of the work. This reads: 'The errors in this drawing are 1. That the topmost course of stones should be concave 2. That the lower windows should be located in the middle of the building 3. That another three stones are missing from the front [east] façade and six stones from the side [north] façade.' In his written description, Wansleben makes no reference to the distinctive cavetto cornice that crowned the external walls of both the White and Red Monastery churches, so this note provides the only evidence that he observed this distinctive archaizing feature. As far as the record of the fenestration of the White Monastery church is concerned, he might usefully have added to his gloss: both rows of windows are shown inaccurately, not merely the lower row. Wansleben went to great pains to represent the stone coursing of the exterior walls—he drew these with a ruler, and a series of dots on the *x* and *y* axes shows that he carefully counted the individual blocks. It must have been galling to have ended up with a mismatch between the number of blocks he counted with the number on the drawing, though this detail appears of minor significance given the larger omissions present.

## 6 A Rediscovered Text

One of the details Wansleben went to some trouble to record at the White Monastery church was a Greek inscription carved (he uses the word *intagliare*) into the surface of a granite column that was one of a pair flanking the central opening between the *khurus* (the *coro esteriore*) and the sanctuary (the *coro interiore*) of the church.<sup>48</sup> He describes the columns as being 'still complete and of a very beautiful design, most particularly as regards their capitals'. The inscription was a dedication in the name of one Heliodoros:

ΥΠΕΡ ΕΥΧΗC ΗΛΙΟΔΩΡΟΥ ΚΑΙ Κ.ΑΛΙΠΟΗC ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΤΕΚΝΩΝ ΑΥΤΩΝ

<sup>48</sup> Wansleben, BNF, MS italien 435, fol. 115v.

Wansleben rendered the text thus: ὑπὲρ ἐυχῆς Ἑλιωδόρου καὶ κυρίας Αλιρόης καὶ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῶν. The same inscription was re-recorded by the British Egyptologist, Sir John Gardner Wilkinson, when he visited the White Monastery in the 1850s; and one of his sketchbooks, dated c. 1855, contains a transcription of the inscription that confirms the accuracy of Wansleben's copy (Fig. 9.5).<sup>49</sup> Ugo Monneret de Villard, however, in his monograph on the White and Red Monasteries published in 1925 described the inscription as lost.<sup>50</sup> Although it is possible that it was covered at that time in a manner to render it invisible, the inscription is, in fact, still present on the column's shaft, executed in three lines of finely cut letters immediately below a large cross in raised relief (Fig. 9.2: W7).<sup>51</sup> As it was located three metres above ground level, it was no mean achievement for Wansleben to copy it precisely without recourse to a ladder. His observation, however, that the inscription was carved into a granite column shaft is patently false since the shaft is made of white marble. It is also strange that he should single out the two columns flanking the entrance to the sanctuary for such praise since they are made up of complete shafts superimposed with short sections of other column shafts and unexceptional re-used Corinthian-style capitals that appear too small for their context: a mish-mash of architectural spolia.

A similar fascination with the quality of stone-carving Wansleben observed at the White Monastery church can be found in his record of the architecture of the Red Monastery church. Here, he drew attention to the skilfully wrought capitals of the nave colonnade, describing them as 'more ingenious than those of the other monastery'.<sup>52</sup> His ultimate praise, however, went to the two capitals of the columns supporting the arch over the entrance to the sanctuary, which he regarded as the most beautiful examples of workmanship he had ever seen in any Christian context.<sup>53</sup>

## 7 Unseen and Unread

Wansleben's account of both monastic churches ignores a number of their most remarkable architectural features. In some cases, the omissions are

49 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Wilkinson dep. e. 67, fol. 68.

50 Monneret de Villard, *Les couvents près de Sohag. Deyr el-Abiad et Deyr el-Ahmar*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1925–6), 1: 25, n. 6.

51 I am grateful to Gillian Pyke for providing photographic proof of the survival of this text.

52 Wansleben, BNF MS italien 435, fol. 118r.

53 For details of these capitals, see D. Kinney, 'Architectural Sculpture', in *The Red Monastery Church: Beauty and Asceticism in Upper Egypt*, ed. E.S. Bolman (New Haven, 2016), p. 83 and figs. 7.6a and 7.6b.



FIGURE 9.5 John Gardner Wilkinson, circa 1855. Sketch of Greek inscription seen by Wansleben and capital of the column of the north side of the entrance to the sanctuary at the White Monastery church. University of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Wilkinson dep. e. 67, fol. 68 (REPRODUCED BY COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL TRUST)

surprising, while in other cases they provide important negative evidence for the condition of the churches in the seventeenth century. He does not comment, for example, on the tapering exterior walls of the churches that give them a general resemblance to ancient Egyptian temples, and only remarks upon their cavetto cornices in the note on his drawing of the White Monastery church. He clearly did not see the remarkable carved limestone north portal of the Red Monastery church, discussed by Richard Pococke<sup>54</sup> and drawn by Wilkinson in detail.<sup>55</sup> Nor does he remark on the unusual and distinctive triconch design of the churches' sanctuaries. None of the ancillary rooms in either church are described: neither the south hall, narthex, baptistery, library or east staircase at the White Monastery church, nor the south hall and pastophoria at the Red Monastery church. It is likely that he was refused access to the internal spaces adjacent to both sanctuaries, but he would certainly have passed through the south hall of the Red Monastery church and the narthex at the White Monastery church in order to access other spaces that are included in his description. Wansleben's overall impression of both sites was one of 'ruin

54 Pococke, *A Description of the East*, p. 79.

55 Oxford, Bodleian, MS Wilkinson dep. e. 67, fols. 50–53.



FIGURE 9.6  
Detail of the inscription of  
Heliodorus (PHOTO: G. PYKE,  
2018)

and barbarousness ... filth and desolation'.<sup>56</sup> He makes no specific mention, however, of village houses within the empty naves of both churches. These 'parasitic' dwellings are a feature of nineteenth-century descriptions of the churches and made it almost impossible for later visitors to see the colonnades in the naves.<sup>57</sup> As Wansleben clearly did see the columns in the naves of both churches, it would seem that these spaces had yet to be occupied by many intrusive structures.

What are we to understand by the absence of any description of the sanctuaries in either church? These spaces contain some of the richest, most impressive, ornamentation in carved stone and polychrome paint to be found in any Christian context in Egypt. Wansleben pointed out the quality of the columns and capitals flanking the entrances to both sanctuaries yet said nothing of the spaces these columns framed. The only plausible explanation for this lacuna is that, by the time of his visit, the decoration of the tri-conches was not visible. Drawn and photographic evidence from the nineteenth century shows us that, in the case of both churches, the individual conches of their sanctuaries were walled up with mud-bricks to forestall structural collapse due to the disintegration of wooden components in their upper and lower cornices. Wilkinson, once again, provides the earliest visual proofs of the appearance of the sanctuaries in the mid-nineteenth century (Fig. 9.7).<sup>58</sup> From these watercolours, it is clear that the sanctuaries would have possessed a far less dramatic architectural quality than they do today, following the removal of the blocking

56 Wansleben, BNF, MS italien 435, fol. 118r.

57 For images, see de Bock, *Matériaux pour servir à l'archéologie de l'Égypte chrétienne*, plates 14 (Red Monastery), 19 and 20 (White Monastery).

58 Jean Clédat later photographed the lobes of the Red Monastery church with their blocking walls in 1904. See Musée du Louvre, Clédat archive, inv. EA27427.



FIGURE 9.7 John Gardner Wilkinson, watercolour and pencil sketches of the sanctuary and painting in the east lobe of the White Monastery church (left) and the sanctuary of the Red Monastery church (right) circa 1855. Bodl., MS. Wilkinson dep. d. 34, fol. 21 (left) and MS. Wilkinson dep. d. 34, fol. 18 (right), IMAGES REPRODUCED BY COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL TRUST

walls and repair of the cornices in the early twentieth century.<sup>59</sup> On the basis of Wansleben's negative testimony, therefore, it would seem that the construction of these blocking walls at both churches, might well be dated prior to 1673.

Wilkinson's drawings of both sanctuaries also show other features that Wansleben made no comment upon: the paintings and inscriptions in the semi-domes. The east apse of the sanctuary at the White Monastery church is dominated by a scene of Christ in Majesty by the Armenian painter Theodore, named in a nearby inscription dated to 1124 (Fig. 9.7; Fig. 9.2: W8). This painting was executed in the time of the Armenian Bishop Gregory, who appears in Abū 'l-Makārīm's chronicle.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Wilkinson also sketched the visible paintings in the north and south semi-domes of the Red Monastery church.<sup>61</sup>

## 8 The Dome in the Nave

Another very remarkable feature of the nave of the White Monastery church that Wansleben did not remark on was a now destroyed domed structure that once stood between two columns of the north colonnade (Fig. 2: W9). The purpose of this building was to enclose a single large granite block, with steps cut out of it, that appears to have functioned as an *ambon* or pulpit. The building was probably demolished in 1907, during work carried out at the church by the *Comité de conservation des monuments de l'art Arabe*, but the granite block with steps remains.<sup>62</sup> Photographic and drawn documentation survives showing the appearance of the structure, notably a photograph taken by Wladimir de Bock in 1897/8 (Fig. 9.8).<sup>63</sup> De Bock also furnished a drawing of the interior of the dome together with an Ethiopian inscription (in *geez*) that one of his

59 For the restorations, see N. Warner and C. Meurice, 'The Comité. Conserving the Red Monastery Church in the Early Twentieth Century', in *The Red Monastery Church: Beauty and Asceticism in Upper Egypt*, ed. E.S. Bolman (New Haven, 2016), pp. 242–59; C. Meurice, 'L'intervention du Comité de conservation des monuments de l'art arabe au couvent Blanc de Sohag', in *Études coptes* XI, *Treizième journée d'études / Cahiers de la Bibliothèque copte*, ed. A. Boud'hors and C. Louis, 17 (2009), 277–88.

60 See W.E. Crum, 'Inscriptions from Shenoute's Monastery', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 5 (1904), 552–69; 556–7 (inscription A3).

61 J.G. Wilkinson, University of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Wilkinson dep. d. 34, fol. 19. For a partial illustration, see N. Warner and C. Meurice, "A Strange Jumble of Roman Detail." Western Explorers and Antiquarians at the Red Monastery, 1673–1926', in *The Red Monastery Church, : Beauty and Asceticism in Upper Egypt*, ed. E.S. Bolman (New Haven, 2016), pp. 231–42; fig. 18.5.

62 Meurice, 'L'intervention du Comité', pp. 280–81.

63 Other published images include a woodblock engraving of the dome seen from the west in R.P.J. Autefage, 'A travers la Haute-Egypte. Lettre du R.P. Autefage, de la Compagnie de Jésus, missionnaire en Egypte, 11', *Les Missions Catholiques*, 19 (April 1887), 185–88; 187, and



FIGURE 9.8 Wladimir De Bock, photograph of the domed structure in the nave, circa 1898. *Matériaux pour servir à l'archéologie de l'Égypte chrétienne*, plate 19

colleagues, B. Touraieff, dated to 1730.<sup>64</sup> An alternative interpretation of the inscription by Conti Rossini dates it to 1563.<sup>65</sup> Whatever its date, however, the text is interesting for the fact that pilgrims from Ethiopia were present at the site.

In plan, the structure was square, with a fired brick dome supported on four semi-circular stone arches. The transitional zone of the dome had eight slightly concave faces separated by small pilasters at the intersections of the faces. Each face had an opening in it with an elaborate cusped arch. The dome itself had eight additional windows around its base. The entire structure would have been plastered internally and externally. No photographs of the interior survive, so we are reliant on the sketch provided by de Bock to comprehend the internal arrangement, most particularly the squinches.

De Bock remarked that the structure was clearly of a later date than the church, which cannot be contested. But when might it have been constructed? In 1930, Ugo Monneret de Villard was the first to notice the close

a photograph reproduced by U. Monneret de Villard, *La necropoli musulmana di Aswān* (Cairo, 1930), plate 23c.

64 De Bock, *Matériaux pour servir à l'archéologie de l'Égypte chrétienne*, p. 54 and figs. 64 and 65.

65 C. Conti Rossini, 'Aethiopica III', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, 9 (1923), 449-68; 462.



correspondence of this dome to those found in the Fatimid necropolis at Aswān.<sup>66</sup> These he dated to between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries on stylistic grounds.<sup>67</sup> Monneret de Villard also pointed out the probable derivation of this kind of domed pavilion (belonging to Type 3 in his typology) from ‘classic models’ found in Byzantine / Coptic Egypt, such as those of the necropolis of Bagawat in the Kharga Oasis.<sup>68</sup> K.A.C. Creswell sought to refine Monneret’s typology of domes by using the style of their squinches and drums as primary dating criteria and concluded that they dated to the eleventh century.<sup>69</sup> In the case of the dome in the White Monastery church, an eleventh-century dating based on style seems too early because it is unlikely the dome was built before the destruction of the nave, which probably occurred in the first half of the thirteenth century. An inscription within the sanctuary records the date of 1259 for the completion of the reconstruction of the sanctuary itself.<sup>70</sup> The architectural analysis of the dome, when taken in the context of the known sequence of reconstruction at the White Monastery church, strongly suggests that this unusual structure already existed at the time Wansleben visited the church and that he simply ignored it in his description.

## 9 Hidden Treasure

Wansleben’s failure to record other singular features of both monasteries in Suhāg must be set against the poor physical condition of both sites, together with the very limited time he allowed himself for his tour. There is, however, one final observation to make in this regard. Wansleben’s primary task for the duration of his second sojourn in Egypt was to collect manuscripts for the French Royal Library. He had at his disposal the linguistic, if not always the financial, means to do so, being proficient in Arabic, Coptic and Ethiopic. The library of the White Monastery, as we now know, contained an enormous collection of Coptic manuscripts primarily related to the writings of St Shenoute.<sup>71</sup>

66 Monneret de Villard, *La necropoli musulmana di Aswān*, p. 42.

67 *Ibid.*, p. 51.

68 *Ibid.*, pp. 24 (typology) and 51.

69 K.A.C. Creswell, *The Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1952–9), 1: 130–44 and plates 40–44; for dating, see pp. 136–8.

70 Crum, ‘Inscriptions from Shenoute’s Monastery’, pp. 560–61 (inscriptions A6 and A7). Monneret, *La necropoli musulmana di Aswān*, p. 42, gives a *terminus post quem* of 1235, based on the inscriptional evidence relating to the post-seismic restoration of the church. See also Monneret de Villard, *Les couvents près de Sohag*, 1: 29.

71 For the discovery and dispersal of the library, see S. Emmel and C.E. Römer, ‘The Library of the White Monastery in Upper Egypt’, in *Leben und Lesen in den frühen Klöstern*

Indeed, Wansleben appears to be the first Western scholar to have ascertained the real importance of Shenoute as a historical figure, referring to him as ‘the chief of all the monks’ in his study of the Coptic church, the *Histoire de l’Église d’Alexandrie*, published in 1677.<sup>72</sup> The manuscripts of the White Monastery were probably stored in the small room immediately north of the east lobe of the sanctuary of the church (Fig. 9.2: W10), though there is evidence that they were ‘a moveable feast’.<sup>73</sup> Yet, as we have seen, Wansleben failed to gain access to any spaces beyond the sanctuary on the occasion of his visit. He also seems not to have enquired about the presence of manuscripts in the monastery or else was told that none existed. If only he had known, when he attended mass in the church on 19 March 1673, that he was standing scant metres away from what Gaston Maspero, the French Egyptologist and director of the Egyptian Antiquities Service at the time, described more than two hundred years later as a mass of ‘incomplete books, detached leaves of discarded Bibles, Gospels ... or sermons that were once used in the monastery ... heaped pell-mell on the floor’.<sup>74</sup> The first traveller to report on the existence of the library was the British physician Charles Perry, who was at the White Monastery most probably in 1742, when he noted the presence of ‘many Manuscripts, wrote on Parchment, in the old Coptic Character’;<sup>75</sup> and it was only in 1778 that the first of these parchment leaves started to be sold clandestinely, thus entering European manuscript collections. It is, perhaps, ironic that the ultimate home for the majority of Shenoute’s literary corpus should be the same library in Paris where the fruits of Wansleben’s own collecting, and his personal manuscript account of the White and Red monasteries, were destined to repose.

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*Ägyptens*, ed. H. Froschauer and C.E. Römer (Vienna, 2008), pp. 5–14; S. Emmel, *Shenoute’s Literary Corpus*, 2 vols. (Louvain, 2004), 1: 18–24.

72 J.M. Wansleben [P.J.M. Vansleb, Dominicain], *Histoire de l’Église d’Alexandrie fondée par S. Marc, que nous appelons celle des Jacobites-Coptes d’Égypte, écrite au Caire même, en 1672 et 1673* (Paris, 1677), p. 312.

73 For the possible organization of the library, see Crum, ‘Inscriptions from Shenoute’s Monastery’, p. 553. For evidence of the collection occupying different spaces at the east end of the church, see S.D. Davis et al., ‘Left Behind: A Recent Discovery of Manuscript Fragments in the White Monastery Church’, *The Journal of Coptic Studies*, 16 (2014), 69–87; 80–83.

74 G. Maspero, *Fragments de la version thébaine de l’Ancien Testament*, Mémoires publiées par les membres de la mission archéologique française au Caire, 6 (Paris, 1892), p. 1.

75 C. Perry, *A View of the Levant: Particularly of Constantinople, Syria, Egypt, and Greece, in which Their Antiquities, Government, Politics, Maxims, Manners, and Customs (with Many Other Circumstances and Contingencies) are Attempted to be Described and Treated on* (London, 1743), p. 370.

## Histoire connectée du monachisme oriental. De l'érudition catholique en Europe aux réformes monastiques au Mont Liban (XVII<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles)

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Si le Proche-Orient des Temps modernes appartient aux provinces arabes de l'Empire ottoman, il est bien souvent conçu par les orientalistes européens et plus généralement dans l'imaginaire occidental comme une vaste Terre Sainte. Après avoir rappelé le passé biblique de la ville de Jbeil (ou Byblos au Liban) dans sa biographie livrée à Carlo Cartari, le savant maronite Abraham Ecchellensis (1605–1664) conclue : 'Cependant, ce qui la rend plus célèbre et plus glorieuse c'est le fait d'avoir été la patrie de cette merveille de l'univers, saint Siméon le Stylite.'<sup>1</sup> Une des caractéristiques de cette Terre Sainte, de l'Égypte à la Syrie en passant par la Palestine, est en effet d'avoir été le cadre des premières expériences érémitiques ou cénobitiques tel le célèbre saint Siméon, ou encore les 'Pères du désert', ces ascètes vivant seuls ou en petits groupes à l'écart des cités en Égypte. Ce même maronite, qui, originaire de Hakel à proximité de Jbeil, connaît une belle carrière académique entre Paris et la péninsule italienne, publie d'ailleurs en 1641 des lettres conservées en arabe et attribuées à saint Antoine le Grand (251–356).<sup>2</sup>

Aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles, l'érudition catholique se penche en effet sur l'histoire du monachisme oriental, ses grandes figures et les 'règles' qui auraient régi les premières expériences de vie anachorétique et cénobitique. L'élaboration de ces savoirs prend place dans un contexte de controverses confessionnelles, alors que les protestants mettent en cause l'ancienneté de la vie monastique, et de réformes d'ordres religieux qui s'inspirent en partie des modèles des Pères du désert. En même temps, surtout à la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle et au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, au Mont-Liban sous domination ottomane, les Églises orientales catholiques développent un monachisme réformé qui prend modèle sur les ordres occidentaux de la Contre-Réforme, tout en affirmant un attachement à

1 M. Issa et J. Moukarzel, 'Abraham Ecchellensis maronita. Biographie faite par Carlo Cartari', *Tempora. Annales d'histoire et d'archéologie*, 18 (2007–2009), 155–95 ; 161.

2 Abraham Ecchellensis, *Sanctissimi Patris nostri B. Antonii Magni monachorum omnium parentis Epistolae viginti nunc primum ex Arabico Latini iuris factae ab Abrahamo Ecchellensi Maronita è Libano ...* (Paris, 1641).

la tradition orientale de la vie monastique, adoptant des 'règles' attribuées à saint Antoine et saint Basile (329–379).

Cet article se propose de dégager les connexions entre ces deux chapitres d'histoire, ordinairement traités indépendamment l'un de l'autre.<sup>3</sup> Orientalisme savant chez les érudits catholiques intéressés aux origines du monachisme d'une part, occidentalisation, parfois qualifiée de 'latinisation', chez ces ordres catholiques orientaux d'autre part : quelles relations entretiennent ces deux segments historiques ? En quoi la construction de savoirs sur le monachisme oriental par les milieux savants catholiques nourrit-elle l'invention de la tradition dans les nouveaux ordres catholiques maronites et melkites ? Il s'agit également d'identifier les 'entre-deux' dans ces transferts culturels : non seulement les missionnaires, les voyageurs et les chrétiens orientaux séjournant en Europe, mais aussi les textes et les traductions en circulation.

## 1 Ermites, retraitants et missionnaires à l'école des Pères du désert

En France et en Espagne, l'anachorèse suscite à la fin du xvi<sup>e</sup> siècle et au xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle nombre de vocations. Au pays du Roi Très Chrétien, un renouveau de l'érémitisme s'opère à la fin du xvi<sup>e</sup> siècle. Jean Sainsaulieu a montré que ce vif idéal érémitique se nourrit de la littérature patristique : 'Le caractère propre à cette période dans l'histoire du genre de vie est l'imitation des Pères du désert. La renaissance des lettres antiques étendue à la patristique avait ramené au jour une littérature chrétienne sur le désert. Ce thème va hanter les imaginations des spirituels pendant plus d'un siècle.'<sup>4</sup> En Espagne, les aspirants à l'anachorèse sont nombreux et la diffusion de l'idéal érémitique peut être observée dans la mouvance de la réforme carmélitaine puisque, en application du concile de Trente, les ermites doivent s'intégrer dans des ordres religieux. Dans son histoire officielle, l'ordre du Carmel prétend avoir été fondé par le prophète Élie et les Pères du mont Carmel en Palestine. Isabelle Poutrin souligne 'l'influence déterminante de la littérature ascétique des iv<sup>e</sup>–vii<sup>e</sup> siècles sur l'idéal

3 B. Heyberger, 'Monachisme oriental, catholicisme et érudition (xvii<sup>e</sup>–xx<sup>e</sup> siècles)', dans *Monachismes d'Orient. Images, échanges, influences*, éd. F. Jullien et M.-J. Pierre (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 165–83.

4 J. Sainsaulieu, 'Ermites. En Occident', dans *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique* (Paris, 1912–), 15 : 771–87 ; id., *Les ermites français* (Paris, 1974) ; Ph. Masson, 'L'érémitisme dans les diocèses champenois et lorrains. Fin xvi<sup>e</sup> – courant xix<sup>e</sup> siècle', thèse non publiée (Université Lyon 2, 2013).

érémitique en expansion dans l'Espagne de la fin du xvi<sup>e</sup> siècle.<sup>5</sup> Au début du xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle, le supérieur général des carmes déchaux Thomas a Jesu (1564–1627) établit des déserts dans chaque province de l'ordre pour retrouver la vocation érémitique originelle malgré l'installation des communautés en milieu urbain.<sup>6</sup>

En France, le mouvement des retraites spirituelles connaît à partir du début du xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle une expansion considérable, devenant une véritable institution dans la vie de l'Église et des fidèles. Cette pratique dévote largement ouverte se nourrit de la lecture des anachorètes égyptiens. Quelques hauts lieux spirituels se démarquent dont Port-Royal. Dès le xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle, tous les mémorialistes ne cessent de répéter l'analogie entre les Solitaires et les Pères du désert, et entre Port-Royal des Champs et la Thébaïde.<sup>7</sup> Les Solitaires font connaître l'hagiographie monastique antique, traduite, publiée, expurgée, abrégée. Ainsi Robert Arnauld d'Andilly (1589–1674) rassemble et traduit en français les *Vies des saints Pères des déserts, et de quelques saintes* (Paris, 1647–1653), recueil essentiel sur l'idéal chrétien de solitude, réédité à de nombreuses reprises jusqu'à la première moitié du xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle. Au sein de ces deux tomes épais, soigneusement composés, il édite notamment, pour la première fois en français, l'*Histoire Philothée* de Théodoret de Cyr (v. 393–v. 460), recueil de portraits de trente ascètes syriens, un texte découvert en France à la Renaissance par la traduction latine de Gentien Hervet (1555) puis la publication en grec et en latin de Jacques Sirmond (1642).<sup>8</sup> Un autre écrivain proche de Port-Royal, Nicolas Fontaine (1625–1709), sous le pseudonyme de Sieur de Saligny, traduit les *Conférences* de Jean

5 I. Poutrin, 'Ascèse et désert en Espagne (1560–1600). Autour de la réforme carmélitaine', *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez*, 25 (1989), 145–59 ; 153 ; A. Saint Saëns, *La nostalgie du désert. L'idéal érémitique en Castille au Siècle d'Or* (San Francisco, 1993) ; A. Rouillet, *Corps et pénitence. Les carmélites déchaussées espagnoles (ca 1560–ca 1640)* (Madrid, 2015), pp. 152–7.

6 P.-M. de la Croix, 'Les déserts chez les carmes déchaussés', dans 'Déserts (saints)', *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, (1937–), 3 : 534–9 ; Heyberger, 'Monachisme oriental', p. 171.

7 B. Beugnot, *Le discours de la retraite au xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle. Loin du monde et du bruit* (Paris, 1996) ; S.-A. Roussel, 'La présence des Pères du désert dans les mémoires de Port-Royal. De la Thébaïde au Sacré-Désert', *Port-Royal et la tradition chrétienne d'Orient*, numéro monographique des *Chroniques de Port-Royal*, 59 (2009), 81–96.

8 Voir l'introduction de P. Canivet et A. Leroy-Molinghen à l'édition de Théodoret de Cyr, *Histoire des moines de Syrie*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1977–1979) ; A. Villard, 'Les Messieurs philologues ? ou les dessous d'une traduction : l'*Echelle sainte* de Jean le Sinaïte (1657)', *Port-Royal et l'humanisme*, numéro monographique des *Chroniques de Port-Royal*, 56 (2006), 227–54 ; ead., 'Les déserts de Syrie. La traduction de l'*Histoire Philothée*, par Arnauld d'Andilly', dans *Port-Royal et la tradition chrétienne d'Orient*, numéro monographique des *Chroniques de Port-Royal*, 59 (2009), 275–306 ; S. Icard, 'Raingarde, que fais-tu donc ici ? Sur la présence d'une lettre de Pierre le Vénéralable dans la traduction des *Vies des saints Pères des déserts* par Robert Arnauld d'Andilly (1647–1653)', *Revue Mabillon*, 26 (2015), 205–17.

Cassien (Paris, 1667), un ouvrage riche d'informations sur le monachisme oriental des déserts de Palestine et d'Égypte. La virtuosité ascétique des anciens moines nourrit la ferveur et la dévotion, comme la pastorale rigoriste.<sup>9</sup>

Une littérature hagiographique se développe pour présenter quelques retraits exemplaires. La vie érémitique du provençal François de Gallaup, Sieur de Chasteuil, au Mont-Liban inspire plusieurs ouvrages. En particulier, Jean de La Roque publie un 'abrégé de la vie de Monsieur de Chasteuil solitaire du Mont-Liban' en appendice de son récit de voyage.<sup>10</sup> Jean de La Roque avait découvert la figure de M. de Chasteuil lors de son séjour au Liban : il évoque, dans son récit, le tombeau de l'ermite provençal dans le fond de l'église Saint-Elisée, retranscrit *in extenso* l'épithame latin et donne quelques indications sur la vie du saint à partir de ce qu'il avait appris dans la *Qādīshā* (la Vallée sainte au Liban). Né à Aix en 1588, Chasteuil se caractérise par deux traits dès sa jeunesse selon ses hagiographes : l'amour de la mortification et le goût pour l'étude, en particulier pour les langues de la Bible. Il s'est lié d'amitié avec un autre provençal, Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580–1635), conseiller au Parlement de Provence, curieux par excellence de l'âge baroque, orientaliste et surtout épistolier infatigable.<sup>11</sup> Avec Peiresc, Chasteuil s'est piqué de langues orientales, apprenant l'hébreu et entreprenant l'étude du Pentateuque samaritain qui intéresse les exégètes et orientalistes dans les années 1620.<sup>12</sup> Peiresc et Chasteuil entretiennent une correspondance avant et après le départ du second : les lettres traitent en particulier de la valeur de la version samaritaine des Écritures mais aussi d'astrologie.<sup>13</sup>

9 J.-L. Quantin, *Le rigorisme chrétien* (Paris, 2001), p. 104 ; *La prière continue au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Exégèse, liturgie, mystique*, éd. D.-O. Hurel et S. Icard (Turnhout, 2017), passim. Voir aussi F. Henryot, 'La lecture de La Trappe (1660–1720) : théories et représentations', *XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 272 (2016), 509–32 ; 513–14 : l'abbé de Rancé (1626–1700), réformateur de La Trappe, corrige en 1673 la traduction des *Ascétiques* par Godefroid Hermant afin de ne pas laisser penser que Basile tolérerait la consommation de la viande.

10 Jean de La Roque, *Voyage de Syrie et du Mont-Liban* (Beyrouth, 1981 ; 1<sup>ère</sup> édition : Paris, 1722), pp. 159–202 ; Heyberger, 'Monachisme oriental', p. 173.

11 P.N. Miller, *Peiresc's Mediterranean World* (Cambridge MA, 2017), passim.

12 François Marchetti, *La Vie de M. de Chasteuil, solitaire du Mont-Liban* (Paris, 1666), pp. 18 et 33 ; J.-P. Rothschild, 'Autour du Pentateuque samaritain. Voyageurs, enthousiastes et savants', dans *Le Grand Siècle et la Bible*, éd. J.-R. Armogathe (Paris, 1989), pp. 61–74 ; P.N. Miller, 'Making the Paris Polyglot Bible: Humanism and Orientalism in the Early Seventeenth Century', dans *The European Republic of Letters in the Age of Confessionalism*, éd. H. Jaumann (Wolfenbüttel, 2001), pp. 59–85.

13 Ph. Tamizey de Laroque, 'François de Galaup-Chasteuil, le solitaire du Mont-Liban ; lettres inédites de Provence et de Syrie à Peiresc (1629-1633)', *Annuaire des Basses-Alpes*, 4 (1889–1890), 314–90.

Sa vocation pour une vie en Orient semble liée tant à son désir d'ascèse qu'à son goût pour les Écritures car, d'après La Roque, il forme le dessein 'de se retirer dans la Palestine pour y mener une vie cachée et pénitente et pour répondre aux idées saintes qu'il avait conçues en lisant l'Écriture'.<sup>14</sup> Il s'embarque de Marseille en 1631 avec le comte de Marcheville, ambassadeur de France à Constantinople.<sup>15</sup> Après un séjour à Constantinople, il ne tarde pas à partir au Mont-Liban, s'installe chez les récollets à Ehden. Là il mène une vie d'ermite jusqu'à sa mort en 1644. Les descriptions de ses ascèses par les hagiographes le rapprochent des Pères du désert :

En effet, on va voir que Monsieur de Chasteuil fut animé du même esprit de ces grands pénitents, dont Saint Jean Climaque avait à parler, et que si sa pénitence n'a pas un rapport entier avec la pénitence affreuse de ces solitaires, il en a assez fait pour édifier l'Église et pour mériter l'application de ces belles paroles.<sup>16</sup>

Son jeûne est toujours plus rigoureux, le démon toujours plus présent physiquement. La cellule de l'ermite se trouve ainsi remplie de puces afin de distraire, sans succès, le saint. Ses hagiographes réemploient les stéréotypes caractéristiques des apophtegmes des Pères du désert. Toutefois Chasteuil conserve son goût pour l'érudition biblique et orientaliste. Si au début c'est lui qui se rend à la rencontre des maronites de la région, très vite, c'est sa réputation de sainteté qui attire à lui les Orientaux à tel point que, d'après ses hagiographes, les maronites l'auraient élu patriarche mais l'ermite aurait refusé. À la fin de sa vie, l'ermite habite avec les carmes de Saint-Elisée à l'invitation de Célestin de Sainte-Lidwyne (1604–1676) qui prononce à sa mort un panégyrique en arabe.

Sur le monachisme oriental, le regard des catholiques européens, en particulier des missionnaires, est paradoxal puisque, d'un côté, ils le jugent décadent et considèrent que ce déclin appelle une réforme ; d'un autre côté, ils croient trouver chez les moines maronites les héritiers des Pères du désert et dans les reliefs des vallées libanaises un cadre naturel aux retraites de religieux solitaires. En mission au Liban en 1596, le jésuite Jérôme Dandini (1554–1634) se déclare 'persuadé que ces moines [maronites] pourraient être un reste de ces anciens ermites qui vivaient séparés des hommes et habitaient en fort

14 De La Roque, *Voyage de Syrie*, p. 168.

15 A. Hamilton, "To Divest the East of All Its Manuscripts and All Its Rarities." The Unfortunate Embassy of Henri Gournay de Marcheville', dans *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, éd. A. Hamilton et al. (Leyde et Boston, 2005), pp. 123–50.

16 De La Roque, *Voyage de Syrie*, p. 179.

grand nombre ces déserts de la Syrie et de la Palestine'. En bon jésuite, il s'appuie sur ses connaissances livresques pour le démontrer. Toutefois il dénonce les 'abus' tels que la pratique du monachisme double (monastères recevant hommes et femmes), des moines propriétaires de biens et l'irrégularité des prières collectives, qu'il entend 'réformer' dans les synodes tenus sous sa direction.<sup>17</sup> Dans la correspondance du jésuite Claude Sicard en Égypte au début du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, le même souvenir des Pères du désert est souvent présent.<sup>18</sup>

Les missionnaires carmes, revenus s'installer au Mont Carmel en 1633, ouvrent un ermitage dans la Vallée Sainte maronite, en prenant possession d'un ancien monastère de saint Élisée que le patriarche maronite, Jirjis 'Amīra, un ancien élève du Collège maronite de Rome, leur donne en 1643. C'est au carme Célestin de Sainte-Lydwine qu'est confiée cette fondation. Né Pieter van Gool, ce dernier est originaire d'une famille calviniste des Pays-Bas et est le frère du fameux orientaliste Jacob van Gool (dit Golius). Confié à son oncle chanoine de la cathédrale d'Anvers, Pieter, devenu catholique, entre en 1624 chez les carmes sous le nom de Célestin de Sainte-Lydwine, et est envoyé en 1632 à la mission d'Alep où il progresse rapidement en arabe. Lors de son voyage en 1689–1690, Jean de La Roque chante la beauté du lieu et la sainteté de la vie des carmes qui vivent dans ce 'désert', combinant l'image concrète du lieu de solitude et la célébration d'une spiritualité du retour aux sources de l'anachorétisme, qui constituent des stéréotypes du discours littéraire sur la retraite au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle.<sup>19</sup>

Ainsi, à la suite des médiévaux, les modernes regardent les moines orientaux comme les héritiers des saints anachorètes et cénobites des premiers

17 Jérôme Dandini, *Voyage du Mont Liban, traduit de l'italien par P. Richard Simon et suivi de ses remarques* (Kaslik, 2005 ; 1<sup>ère</sup> édition : Paris, 1675), pp. 71–2 ; P. Sfeir, *Les ermites dans l'Église maronite* (Kaslik, 1986), pp. 33–61 ; S. Mohasseb-Saliba, *Les monastères maronites doubles du Liban : entre Rome et l'Empire ottoman, XVII<sup>e</sup>–XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Kaslik, Paris, 2008) ; Heyberger, 'Monachisme oriental', pp. 169–70 et 178.

18 *Nouveaux mémoires des missions de la compagnie de Jésus dans le Levant*, 8 vols. (Paris, 1725), 8 : 126 et 138. Déjà pour les voyageurs du Moyen Âge, les vies de saint Antoine par Athanase et de saint Paul par Jérôme constituent un objet de fascination. Théologiens, pèlerins et missionnaires voient dans les moines orientaux les héritiers des anachorètes et cénobites des premiers siècles et reconnaissent la dette du monachisme occidental à l'égard de ces pionniers. Voir A. Hamilton, *The Copts and the West, 1439–1822. The European Discovery of the Egyptian Church* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 108–9 ; C. Rouxpetel, *L'Occident au miroir de l'Orient chrétien. Cilicie, Syrie, Palestine et Égypte (XI<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Rome, 2015), pp. 405–57.

19 De La Roque, *Voyage de Syrie*, pp. 24–7 ; S. Khalil Samir, *Le P. Célestin de Sainte-Lydwina alias Peter van Gool (1604–1676), missionnaire carme et orientaliste. Étude historico-littéraire* (Beyrouth, 1995) ; Beugnot, *Le discours de la retraite*, pp. 87–127 et 209–56 ; Heyberger, 'Monachisme oriental', pp. 172–3.



siècles, à l'égard desquels le monachisme occidental ne cesse de reconnaître sa dette. Et c'est aussi en se tournant vers ces modèles qu'à plusieurs reprises, des ordres réforment leur vie religieuse, comme en se rechargeant à l'école des athlètes de Dieu, dont la radicalité dans le renoncement et l'exigence évangélique semblent constituer un exemple indépassable.<sup>20</sup> Le romanocentrisme de l'Église catholique des temps modernes tempère néanmoins cette fascination, en conduisant autorités ecclésiales, théologiens et missionnaires à remarquer la 'décadence' des monastères orientaux, des déformations qui éloignent la vie religieuse contemporaine de ce qu'elle fut et devrait être, et qui appellent des 'réformes'.

## 2 Des controverses à l'érudition : essor d'un savoir sur les monachismes orientaux

En raison de la fascination qu'il exerce, le monachisme oriental antique constitue au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle l'objet de controverses qui incitent aussi les savants à développer les connaissances sur cette page d'histoire, en s'attachant notamment à la question des règles monastiques. Ces disputes opposent d'abord les protestants qui, s'attaquant au principe même des vœux, refusent une telle ancienteté à la vie monastique et les catholiques qui, au contraire, démontrent la véracité des témoignages sur les Pères du désert.<sup>21</sup> L'existence même de saint Antoine le Grand se trouve au cœur d'un conflit et l'authenticité de la *Vie* d'Antoine rédigée par saint Athanase est en particulier discutée. Les *Centuries* de Magdebourg (Bâle, 1559–1574), somme d'érudition dirigée par le luthérien Matthias Flacius Illyricus qui donne les grandes lignes à la controverse historique protestante, l'ont mise en doute. Le savant maronite Abraham Ecchellensis apporte le renfort des sources arabes pour prouver l'existence du 'père de tous les moines'. Il publie l'intégralité du *Corpus Arabicum* attribué au saint égyptien en deux livres. D'abord, en 1641 chez Antoine Vitré (Paris), il édite la

20 Le traducteur des *Ascétiques* de Basile en français, Godefroy Hermant, exprime bien cette prise de conscience d'une décadence au miroir des Pères, lorsque il dresse le portrait d'un saint Benoît 'qui a été assez humble pour s'accuser & tous ses Religieux de lâcheté & de négligence en comparant sa vie & la leur à celle de ces anciens Solitaires qui pratiquaient si exactement la Règle de S. Basile' : *Les Ascétiques ou traittez spirituels de S<sup>t</sup> Basile le Grand, Archevesque de Césarée en Cappadoce. Traduit en François, & éclaircis par des Remarques tirées des Conciles, & des saints Peres de l'Église*, trad. Godefroy Hermant (Paris, 1678), fol. 3v.

21 Martin Luther, *Jugement sur les vœux monastiques* (1521), dans id., *Œuvres* (Paris, 1999–), 1 : 880–1033 ; Jean Calvin, 'Les vœux monastiques' (1v.13), dans id., *L'Institution de la religion chrétienne* (1<sup>ère</sup> éd. : 1536) ; J.-M. Le Gall, *Les moines au temps des Réformes, France (1480–1560)* (Paris, 2001), pp. 531–90.

traduction latine de *Vingt lettres* conservées en arabe de l'ermitte pourtant réputé analphabète (à la suite d'une certaine lecture de sa biographie par Athanase). Dédiées au cardinal Francesco Barberini, patron estimé des arts et des sciences à Rome, ces lettres arabes constituent, selon Ecchellensis, des traductions du début du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle d'originaux 'égyptiens' perdus, alors que les sept premières lettres sont déjà connues par d'autres versions et publiées. Si la critique actuelle reconnaît les sept premières lettres comme authentiques, elle attribue les treize dernières lettres, qui n'existent qu'en arabe, principalement à Ammonas (IV<sup>e</sup> siècle), l'un des disciples d'Antoine.<sup>22</sup> Ecchellensis utilise un manuscrit 'vetustissimus' conservé au Collège maronite à Rome dont il est un ancien élève.<sup>23</sup> Il s'en prend aux luthériens et calvinistes qui affirment que le monachisme n'a pas existé au cours des premiers siècles de l'Église. Ecchellensis mentionne non seulement de nombreux historiens chrétiens qui témoignent du contraire, mais surtout cite en arabe et traduit en latin un extrait du polygraphe égyptien Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (1445–1505) qui montre que Muḥammad lui-même demanda à ses partisans de respecter cette ancienne tradition. Ecchellensis tire ces quelques lignes d'un manuscrit rapporté de Tunis en 1633 alors que le maronite y pratique le trafic d'esclaves. Ce précieux texte lui sert d'introduction dans le monde savant lors de son arrivée à Rome

22 Ecchellensis, *B. Antonii Magni ... Epistolae* (adresse au lecteur non paginée) ; G. Garitte, 'À propos des lettres de Saint Antoine l'Ermitte', *Le Museon*, 52 (1939), 11–32 ; Saint Antoine, *Lettres* (Bégrolles-en-Mauges, 1976), introd. André Louf ; S. Rubenson, 'The Arabic Version of the Letters of St Antony', *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 226 (1986), 19–29 ; id., 'Arabic Sources for the Theology of the Early Monastic Movement in Egypt', *Parole de l'Orient*, 16 (1990–1991), 33–47 ; id. *The Letters of St. Antony. Monasticism and Making of a Saint* (Minneapolis, 1995) ; G. Farag, 'Les Lettres attribuées à Antoine dans la deuxième collection arabe (lettres 8 à 20). Sont-elles d'Antoine ou d'Ammonas ? Étude comparée des différentes versions et interprétation théologique', thèse non publiée (Université de Strasbourg, 2012) ; E. Poirot, *Saint Antoine le Grand dans l'Orient chrétien. Dossier littéraire, hagiographique, liturgique, iconographique en langue française* (Francfort-sur-le-Main, 2014), pp. 133–246. Le charismatique moine copte Mattā al-Miskīn (1919–2006), qui tint un rôle déterminant dans le renouveau du monachisme copte orthodoxe, enseigna la spiritualité monastique en s'appuyant particulièrement sur ces lettres faussement attribuées à Antoine depuis Ecchellensis ; voir M. El-Maskīne, *Saint Antoine : ascète selon l'Évangile. Suivi de Les vingt lettres de saint Antoine selon la tradition arabe* (Bégrolles-en-Mauges, 1993) ; id., 'L'essentiel de la vie monastique d'après les lettres de saint Antoine', *Irénikon*, 70 (1997), 363–73. Les œuvres de saint Antoine sont également recherchées en syriaque à l'occasion des missions de collectes de manuscrits destinés à enrichir la Bibliothèque du roi de France : H. Omont, *Missions archéologiques françaises en Orient aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris, 1902), 1 : 39.

23 Le manuscrit est actuellement : Cité du Vatican, Bibliothèque apostolique vaticane (désormais BAV), MS Vat. ar. 398.

en 1636.<sup>24</sup> Dans l'adresse au lecteur, il explique avoir traduit ces textes mot à mot sans rechercher l'élégance : ce refus affiché de faire œuvre littéraire, assez commun dans l'érudition ecclésiastique, a lui-même une valeur apologétique.<sup>25</sup>

Quelques années plus tard, en 1646, à nouveau à Paris où il est professeur au Collège royal, Ecchellensis publie le reste du corpus arabe de l'ermitte sous le titre *Sapientissimi Patris nostri Antonii magni abbatis Regulae, sermones, documenta, admonitiones, responsiones et vita duplex*. Ces textes, la *Règle*, les *Vingt sermons à ses fils moines*, les *Enseignements spirituels*, et une *Vie* arabe se présentent à nouveau comme des traductions latines d'originaux arabes. Ce travail s'inscrit dans la continuité du précédent : le maronite avait en effet promis au cardinal Barberini de continuer ses études antonines. Ecchellensis se fonde sur des manuscrits conservés dans la capitale pontificale au Collège maronite (MSS Vat. ar. 398 à nouveau et Vat. syr. 424 en arabe *garshūnī*) et au couvent franciscain de San Pietro in Montorio, un établissement où l'arabe est enseigné pour les religieux se destinant à la mission au Moyen-Orient. Un prêtre romain érudit nommé en latin Ioannes Baptista Marus, chanoine de l'église Sant'Angelo in Pesceria, aurait également eu ces manuscrits entre les mains : Ecchellensis le présente en garant de son travail. À ceux qui, sceptiques, demanderaient quelle était la preuve que ces textes étaient bien de saint Antoine, le maronite répond que toutes les traditions des moines orientaux l'affirment et que leur consensus sur ce point constitue la plus éclatante démonstration car toutes ces 'nations' (melkites, jacobites, nestoriens, maronites etc.) ne peuvent s'accorder pour inventer quelque chose de semblable. La critique actuelle admet que cette collection arabe attribuée à Antoine (la plupart des documents ne sont connus qu'en cette langue) mériterait davantage d'attention, d'autant que plusieurs textes figurent dans un grand nombre de manuscrits. La majeure partie de ce corpus est inauthentique : ce sont souvent des compilations, plus ou moins tardives, qui furent placées sous le patronage du saint. Les versions latines d'Ecchellensis sont fort éloignées des originaux qu'il prétend traduire.<sup>26</sup> La postérité de ces deux livres est décevante : les publications du maronite ont peu de succès dans les débats érudits de l'époque

24 D. Stolzenberg, 'Une collaboration dans la *cosmopolis* catholique : Abraham Ecchellensis et Athanasius Kircher', *Orientalisme, sciences et controverse : Abraham Ecchellensis (1605–1664)*, éd. B. Heyberger (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 81–8.

25 P. Rietbergen, *Power and Religion in Baroque Rome. Barberini Cultural Policies* (Leyde et Boston, 2006), pp. 312–13 ; J.-L. Quantin, 'Document, histoire, critique dans l'érudition ecclésiastique des temps modernes', *Recherches de science religieuse*, 92.4 (2004), 597–635 ; 606–7.

26 Abraham Ecchellensis, *Sapientissimi Patris nostri Antonii magni abbatis Regulae, sermones, documenta, admonitiones, responsiones et vita duplex* (Paris, 1646) ; B. Contzen, *Die Regel des heiligen Antonius : eine Studie*, (Metten, 1896) ; Rubenson, 'Arabic Sources',

moderne. La *Vie d'Antoine* par saint Athanase constitue le vrai point de dispute : mise en doute par les centuriateurs, elle est soutenue par les bollandistes, par Montfaucon et Tillemont.<sup>27</sup>

Ecchellensis entreprend la préparation de son ouvrage à Rome entre 1642 et 1644 dans l'entourage du cardinal Barberini intéressé à la connaissance des christianismes orientaux. D'ailleurs, il mentionne dans ses adresses au lecteur un autre savant proche du cardinal mécène, Lucas Holstenius (ou Holste, 1596–1661), érudit allemand converti au catholicisme, bibliothécaire du cardinal Barberini puis custode à la Bibliothèque Vaticane.<sup>28</sup> Au cours de son séjour parisien, Ecchellensis entretient une correspondance avec Holstenius et évoque ses travaux sur saint Antoine.<sup>29</sup> Il explique dans son ouvrage de 1646 que Holstenius prépare une édition des règles de saint Antoine mais à partir d'un autre manuscrit conservé au Collège maronite. En fait l'ouvrage de Holstenius voit le jour à titre posthume en 1661. Benoît d'Aniane, au début du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle, animé par le souci de la réforme monastique, avait réuni les différentes règles monastiques orientales et occidentales. L'ouvrage, appelé ordinairement *Codex regularum*, devait être lu chaque matin par les bénédictins. Le savant allemand en entreprend l'édition, en l'augmentant de règles de diverses origines, sous le titre de *Codex regularum quas Sancti Patres monachis et virginibus sanctimonialibus servandas praescribere, collectus olim a S. Benedicto anianensi abbate*. Au sein d'une première partie consacrée à la tradition orientale, les premiers 'Regulae ac Praecepta' publiés sont attribués à Antoine le Grand (pp. 3–10), suivis des Préceptes d'Isaïe de Scété (pp. 13–22), des 'règles' qui ne figurent pas dans le texte de Benoît d'Aniane. La traduction de ces deux textes serait probablement l'œuvre d'Ecchellensis, malgré les différences entre la règle publiée en 1646 par le maronite et celle éditée par Holstenius en 1661. Si cette *Règle* n'a pas été écrite par Antoine, elle comprend des expressions qui lui sont attribuées dans sa *Vie* par Athanase, dans les apophtegmes, les *Lettres* et les *Avertissements*. D'ailleurs ce ne sont pas tant des 'règles', dans le sens qu'a pris ce terme pour la normativité monastique occidentale, qu'une liste de conseils ascétiques tels '19. Ne va pas dans le local où l'on extrait le vin', ou

pp. 40–45 ; Rietbergen, *Power and Religion.*, pp. 317–18 ; Poirot, *Saint Antoine le Grand*, pp. 33–7, 176–246 et 761–782.

27 J. David, 'saint Antoine, ermite', *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* (Paris, 1912– ), 3: 726–34.

28 R. Almagià, *L'opera geografica di Luca Holstenio* (Cité du Vatican, 1942) ; E. Sastre Santos, 'Un memorial de Lucas Holstenius sobre la propagación de la fe', *Euntes Docete*, 35 (1982), 507–24 ; Rietbergen, *Power and Religion*, pp. 256–95 ; S. Ditchfield, 'What Was Sacred History? (Mostly Roman) Catholic Uses of the Christian Past after Trent', dans *Sacred History. Uses of the Christian Past in the Renaissance World*, éd. K. Van Liere, S. Ditchfield et H. Louthan (Oxford, 2012), pp. 72–97 ; 81–84.

29 BAV, MS Barb. lat. 6499, fols. 1r–5v.

encore '68. Qu'aucun travail ne te répugne et le repos te renverra vite à Dieu'.<sup>30</sup> Au Moyen Âge, alors que les Byzantins définissent l'organisation et le fonctionnement d'une communauté monastique en rédigeant des *typika* de fondation, les Latins, projetant les catégories occidentales sur les monachismes orientaux, croient en l'existence d'une règle de saint Antoine, comme d'une règle de Pacôme et encore une de Basile.<sup>31</sup>

Car il n'existe pas non plus de 'règle de saint Basile'. Bien connue en Occident au Moyen Âge, l'improprement nommée *Regula Basilii* publiée par Holstenius dans le *Codex regularum* consiste en un *Petit Askétikon*, préparé à la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle par Rufin d'Aquilée.<sup>32</sup> Il s'agit de 203 réponses apportées par Basile aux demandes de fraternités visitées par le cappadocien. Cette recension ne circule pas en Orient qui ne copie que le *Grand Askétikon*, composé de deux séries d'interrogations : les 55 questions longues (les 'Grandes Règles') puis 313 questions brèves (les 'Petites Règles').<sup>33</sup> À l'époque moderne, saint

30 L'historien du monachisme antique, Adalbert de Vogüé (1924–2011) reproche à Holstenius d'avoir 'gravement défiguré' l'œuvre de l'abbé d'Aniane notamment parce que le savant allemand a inséré des 'pièces étrangères ... de véritables pièges, où tombent trop d'historiens, encore de nos jours, ainsi les Règles attribuées à Antoine et à Isaïe ...' : A. de Vogüé, *Les règles monastiques anciennes (400–700)* (Turnhout, 1985), p. 43. Lucas Holstenius, *Codex regularum, quas Sancti Patres monachis et virginibus sanctimonialibus servandas praescribere, collectus olim a S. Benedicto, anianensi abbate, Lucas Holstenius, ... in tres partes digestum auctumque edidit* (Rome, 1661 ; puis Paris, 1663) ; J.-M. Sauget, 'La double recension arabe des préceptes aux novices de l'abbé Isaïe de Scété', dans *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant*, 7 vols. (Cité du Vatican, 1964), 3 : 299–356 ; A. Mokbel, 'La Règle de saint Antoine le Grand', *Melto*, 2 (1966), 207–27 ; M. Breydy, 'La version des Règles et Préceptes de St. Antoine vérifiée sur les manuscrits arabes', dans *Études sur le christianisme dans l'Égypte de l'Antiquité tardive*, éd. Ewa Wipszycka (Rome, 1996), pp. 395–403 ; Poirot, *Saint Antoine le Grand*, pp. 202–8 et 763–82.

31 *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, éd. J. Thomas et A. Constantinides Hero, 5 vols. (Washington DC, 1998), 1 : 31–2 et 37–8 ; J. Getcha, *Le Typikon décrypté. Manuel de liturgie byzantine* (Paris, 2013), pp. 43–4 ; Poirot, *Saint Antoine le Grand*, pp. 202–3 ; Rouxpetel, *L'Occident au miroir de l'Orient chrétien*, pp. 436–44 (voir également les remarques qu'ajoute Annick Peters-Custot dans la recension de l'ouvrage, publiée dans la *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 235,1 [2018], 169–71). Sur la 'règle' de Pacôme, en fait de très modestes règlements pratiques, voir A. Boon, *Pachomiana latina : Règle et Épîtres de s. Pachome, Épître de s. Théodore et Liber de s. Orsiesus* (Louvain, 1932), pp. 3–74.

32 Holstenius, *Codex regularum*, 1 : 173–280.

33 J. Gribomont, *Histoire du texte des Ascétiques de S. Basile* (Louvain, 1953) ; id., 'Sed et Regula S. Patris nostri Basilii', in *Saint Basile. Évangile et Église. Mélanges*, 2 vols. (Béglrolles-en-Mauges, 1984), 2 : 521–35 ; P. J. Fedwick, *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis*, III : *The Ascetica ...* (Turnhout, 1997) ; id., *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis*, V : *Studies of Basil of Caesarea and His World. An Annotated Bio-Bibliography* (Turnhout, 2004) ; *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great*, introd. et trad. A. M. Silvas (Oxford, 2005) ; A. Peters-Custot, 'Règle de saint Basile', à paraître dans *Moines d'Orient et d'Occident. Histoire et dictionnaire du monachisme*, éd. D.-O. Hurel.

Basile s'est définitivement imposé, pour les Occidentaux, comme un 'grand maître de la vie monastique' (Mabillon) : 'on peut dire que tout ce qu'il y a eu de solide piété dans les Monastères de l'Orient et de l'Occident depuis S. Basile est un effet de l'esprit de grâce dont sa Règle est animée' résume Godefroy Hermant (1617–1690), éditeur janséniste, qui contribue à faire connaître auprès d'un lectorat francophone, également laïque, les *Ascétiques ou traités spirituels de Saint Basile Le Grand* (Paris, 1673 puis 1727).<sup>34</sup> Le *Grand Askétikon* grec, découvert en Occident à la Renaissance, bénéficie surtout du travail érudit et critique des mauristes qui, sous la direction de dom Julien Garnier et dom Prudent Maran procurent une édition incontournable des *Opera omnia* de saint Basile, en trois volumes (Paris 1721, 1722 et 1730).<sup>35</sup>

Des controverses sur le monachisme oriental antique surgissent aussi au sein même des catholiques, telle la dispute sur l'antiquité du carmel qui touche à l'histoire ancienne et médiévale de l'Orient chrétien et surtout la querelle sur les études monastiques, au cours de laquelle Rancé comme Mabillon se réfèrent à l'exemple des solitaires orientaux.<sup>36</sup> Mabillon puise largement sa matière sur le monachisme oriental dans l'*Essai sur l'histoire monastique d'Orient*

34 Hermant, *Les Ascétiques*, fol. 4r ; Jean Mabillon, *Traité des études monastiques* (Paris, 1691), réédité par D.-O. Hurel, *Le moine et l'historien. Dom Mabillon. Œuvres choisies* (Paris, 2007), pp. 365–625 ; 395. Sur Godefroy Hermant, voir J.-L. Quantin, *Le catholicisme classique et les Pères de l'Église. Un retour aux sources (1669–1713)* (Paris, 1999), passim ; F. Gabriel, 'Communautés de silence : clôtures, intériorité, règles et traditions monastiques à la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle', dans *La rivoluzione interiore*, numéro monographique de la revue *Lo Sguardo—Rivista di filosofia*, 10 (2012), 11–37.

35 Sur la connaissance et la diffusion des œuvres de saint Basile à l'époque moderne en Europe, voir D. Amand, 'Essai d'une histoire critique des éditions générales grecques et gréco-latines de s. Basile de Césarée', *Revue Bénédictine*, 52 (1940), 141–61 ; 53 (1941), 119–51 ; 54 (1942), 124–44 ; p. 136 ; 56 (1945–1946), 126–73 ; J. Gribomont, 'L'Exhortation au renoncement attribuée à saint Basile', in *Saint Basile. Évangile et Église. Mélanges*, 2 vols. (Bégrolles-en-Mauges, 1984), 2 : 365–88 ; I. Backus, *Lectures humanistes de Basile de Césarée. Traductions latines (1439–1618)* (Paris, 1990) ; ead., 'L'édition de 1618 des œuvres de Basile de Césarée et sa fortune', dans *Les Pères de l'Église au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, éd. E. Bury et B. Meunier (Paris, 1993), pp. 153–74 ; et B. Gain, 'En marge de l'édition bénédictine de saint Basile', dans *Chartae caritatis : études de patristique et d'antiquité tardive en hommage à Yves-Marie Duval*, éd. B. Gain et al. (Paris, 2004), pp. 343–56 ; A. Girard et S. Mohasseb-Saliba, 'La naissance des ordres réformés basiliens au Proche-Orient arabe : réflexions sur la construction d'un monachisme "grec" et catholique au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', à paraître dans *De Basile aux Basiliens. La postérité monastique d'un Père grec en Orient et en Occident (du Moyen Âge à l'époque contemporaine)*, éd. O. Delouis et A. Peters-Custot (Paris).

36 Armand Jean Le Bouthillier de Rancé, *De la sainteté et des devoirs de la vie monastique* (1683, Paris), pp. 7–8 et 12–24 ; D.-O. Hurel, 'De la querelle sur la place des études dans la vie monastique à la définition d'un monachisme éclairé : le *Traité des études monastiques* (1691)', dans id., *Le moine et l'historien. Dom Mabillon. Œuvres choisies* (Paris, 2007), pp. 367–79, et les extraits de Dom Mabillon, pp. 397 et 436–60.

de Louis Bulteau publié à Paris en 1680. En cette fin de XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, plusieurs synthèses érudites sur l'histoire du monachisme oriental sont publiées et contribuent à développer considérablement les connaissances. Outre les sommes de Holstenius, Bulteau et Mabillon, il faut mentionner les *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles* publiées à partir de 1693 par Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont,<sup>37</sup> et l'*Histoire des ordres monastiques, religieux et militaires, et des congrégations séculières de l'un et l'autre sexe, qui ont été établies jusqu'à présent* du Père Hélyot éditée à partir de 1714, et dont le premier volume traite des 'ordres de saint Antoine, de saint Basile, et des autres fondateurs de la vie monastique en Orient, avec les ordres militaires qui ont suivi leur règle'. Ces ouvrages modèlent la représentation occidentale de l'histoire du monachisme oriental.

Louis Bulteau (1625–1693), secrétaire du roi puis frère convers chez les mauristes, définit dans son 'avertissement' une méthode historique identique à celle de Mabillon : il met en avant son sens critique, annonce avoir recours aux ouvrages des Anciens et prend garde de 'ne pas confondre le vraisemblable avec le vrai'.<sup>38</sup> Si le travail des Bollandistes se trouve mis à contribution, Bulteau utilise fréquemment les récits des voyageurs et des missionnaires comme Johann Michael Wansleben (1635–1679).<sup>39</sup> Il rappelle d'emblée que saint Benoît ordonnait de lire les 'vies et conférences des Pères du désert' : Bulteau pense que sa synthèse historique facilitera l'appréhension de ces textes. Dans cet *Essai*, l'historien présente les Pères orientaux comme des fondateurs d'institutions monastiques et des rédacteurs de règles. Par exemple, Bulteau consacre un long chapitre à saint Antoine : il aurait fondé des monastères en Égypte et rédigé des règles à la demande de ses disciples. En s'appuyant sur la relation de voyage de Dandini, Bulteau rappelle que les solitaires du Mont Liban portaient encore le nom de moines de saint Antoine. Il s'interroge aussi sur un habit propre aux moines de saint Antoine : d'après les sources anciennes, ils portaient la couleur blanche alors qu'en Orient leur vêtement est désormais noir. Bulteau tend donc à considérer Antoine comme fondateur d'une vie monastique ordonnée, dotant les moines d'un habit et d'une règle. Quant à Pacôme, 'on doit le regarder comme le Fondateur de l'Ordre monastique dans ce pays-là, parce qu'il le perfectionna et l'étendit beaucoup, et qu'il fut le premier qui unit des Monastères en congrégation, et qui introduisit cette forme de gouvernement, qui est si avantageuse pour le maintien de l'observance'. L'auteur de l'*Essai* projette donc sur l'histoire du monachisme oriental un modèle

37 Sur Tillemont, voir B. Neveu, *Un historien à l'école de Port-Royal. Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont 1637–1698* (La Haye, 1966).

38 Quantin, 'Document, histoire, critique', pp. 617 et sq.

39 Hamilton, *The Copts and the West*, pp. 139–51 ; id., *Johann Michael Wansleben's Travels in the Levant, 1671–1674. An Annotated Edition of His Italian Report* (Leyde, 2018).

typiquement occidental, propre par exemple à l'ordre des bénédictins, et inconnu en Orient où les monastères conservent leur autonomie.<sup>40</sup>

Le franciscain Pierre Hélyot (1660–1716) livre une somme encyclopédique sur les ordres monastiques. Comme le révèle la longue bibliographie qu'il fait figurer après la préface, il puise à un nombre considérable de sources anciennes mais aussi d'ouvrages modernes, traités d'histoire ou récits de missionnaires. Il évoque aussi des témoignages oraux d'Orientaux qui voyagèrent en Europe et qu'il put rencontrer en particulier lors de son séjour à Rome. Hélyot n'esquive aucune des controverses et discute toutes les hypothèses. Il démontre un esprit critique aigu sur les sources, les idées reçues et les thèses en présence. Toutefois, sa compréhension du monachisme ne se libère pas tout à fait d'une projection des structures occidentales médiévales sur les réalités orientales. Il énonce dans sa préface qu'il n'existe que quatre règles principales, celles de saint Basile, de saint Augustin, de saint Benoît, et de saint François.<sup>41</sup> Après avoir souligné l'ancienneté de la vie monastique, Hélyot consacre un chapitre à saint Antoine 'père des coenobites'. Réfutant Tillemont,<sup>42</sup> il affirme qu'Antoine fonda réellement 'de véritables monastères parfaits et réglés où l'on vivait en commun'.<sup>43</sup> Toutefois ce fut avec saint Basile dans la seconde moitié du iv<sup>e</sup> siècle que le monachisme oriental parvint selon lui à une certaine maturité : il réunit cénobites et anachorètes, les obligea à prononcer des vœux solennels et leur donna des règles que tous les Orientaux adoptèrent.

Hélyot précise sa pensée sur cette unification du monachisme oriental sous une 'règle de Basile' : si, d'après lui, une règle de saint Antoine existe effectivement, Hélyot considère, contrairement à Tillemont, que les maronites et autres Orientaux qui se définissent comme l'ordre de saint Antoine ne suivent pas cette règle mais les *Ascétiques* de saint Basile.<sup>44</sup> Le franciscain revient à nouveau sur ce point dans un chapitre consacré aux maronites, qui s'appuie en particulier sur la lecture du voyageur Eugène Roger et du savant maronite Fauste Nairon (1628–1711). Le franciscain a connaissance des réformes monastiques menées sous le patriarcat d'Istifān al-Duwayhī (1670–1704).<sup>45</sup> Hélyot traite des communautés qui se revendiquent de saint Antoine. Outre les maronites, il s'agit de toutes les Églises non chalcédoniennes (coptes, arméniens

40 L. Bulteau, *L'Essai sur l'histoire monastique d'Orient* (Paris, 1680).

41 Pierre Hélyot, *Histoire des ordres monastiques, religieux et militaires...*, 8 vol. (Douai, 1714–1719), 1: XVII.

42 Sébastien Le Nain de Tillemont, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique des six premiers siècles* (Douai, 1693–1712), 7 : 101–44 et 666–71.

43 Hélyot, *Histoire des ordres monastiques*, p. 39.

44 Ibid., pp. 53 et 80.

45 Ibid., pp. 86–94.



etc.). Plus loin le franciscain consacre une partie exclusivement à Basile et aux basilieniens.<sup>46</sup> Parmi ces derniers, figurent les moines melkites 'qui suivent aussi avec les moines grecs la règle de saint Basile'.<sup>47</sup> Ainsi, Pierre Hélyot diminue la portée de la 'règle de Saint Antoine' sans même discuter l'authenticité du texte. Il conçoit l'expression 'ordre de saint Antoine' comme un simple label utilisé par tous les moines 'non grecs'. Aux yeux du franciscain, tous les moines de rite grec appartiennent à l'ordre de saint Basile et suivent ses règles. Les autres moines puisent aussi leurs règles aux *Ascétiques*. Malgré ces nuances, Hélyot opère un classement des ordres monastiques orientaux, attribuant à chacun un habit, rationalisant la situation en suivant les différentes 'nations'. En outre, en mettant sur le même plan la 'règle de saint Basile' et les règles de saint Benoît ou saint François, il surestime le contenu normatif des *Ascétiques* de Basile, surtout constituées de recommandations pour la vie monastique.

De la controverse, en particulier confessionnelle, la science historique tire son meilleur parti, amassant voire inventant de nouveaux documents, affûtant les outils critiques, réunissant dans des synthèses des savoirs devenus encyclopédiques. Aussi parce que les règles de l'histoire savante sont de fabrication monastique, le monachisme oriental constitue un chapitre essentiel pour l'érudition ecclésiastique du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Seulement les catégories dans lesquelles sont menées ces recherches décalquent les structures historiques du cénobitisme occidental : les fondateurs deviennent nécessairement des 'législateurs' qui inventèrent des règles.<sup>48</sup> En plus des manuscrits, les relations de missionnaires et de voyageurs ainsi que les témoignages des chrétiens orientaux séjournant en Europe sont également sollicités comme des sources. Quelques savants maronites contribuent eux-mêmes à l'élaboration de ces savoirs, en particulier à Rome, favorisant ainsi le transfert des textes et représentations au Mont Liban à partir de la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle.

### 3 Occidentalisation et tradition orientale au prisme romain

La montagne libanaise des Temps modernes connaît une densité exceptionnelle de monastères, grâce au déploiement d'ordres religieux catholiques

46 Ibid., pp. 169 et sq.

47 Ibid., p. 202.

48 Godefroy Hermant compare ces 'Législateurs' à 'Moïse, & [on] dit qu'étant couverts d'un nuage, & s'étant retirés à l'écart sur une montagne pour s'éloigner du tumulte et du trouble de cette vie si inquiète, ils ont fait la fonction de Législateurs' : cité par Gabriel, 'Communautés de silence', p. 24.

orientaux fondés dans le sillage de l'application de la Réforme tridentine dans les Églises orientales. À la fin du xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle et au début du siècle suivant, des congrégations apparaissent dans plusieurs Églises. La plupart des fondateurs sont originaires d'Alep, la métropole du nord de la Syrie, véritable creuset du catholicisme proche-oriental. La concentration des monastères dans la montagne favorise les interactions entre les ordres. Nous ne reviendrons pas ici en détail sur la formation des règles basiliennes dans les ordres grecs-catholiques (šūwayrites et salvatoriens), pour nous concentrer sur le cas du monachisme maronite, en particulier le premier ordre, fondé en 1695, l'ordre libanais de Saint-Antoine. Le deuxième ordre religieux maronite, l'ordre des moines de Saint-Isaïe fondé en 1700, ainsi que l'ordre grec-catholique des basiliens šūwayrites et l'ordre des Antonins arméniens adoptent les mêmes constitutions.<sup>49</sup>

À la fin du xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle, de jeunes maronites alépins, notamment Jibrā'īl Ḥawā et 'Abdallāh Qarā'alī quittent la ville syrienne pour embrasser la vie monastique dans la rude montagne libanaise. Ils sont déçus par leur première expérience de la vie monastique, dénoncent le pratique du monachisme double et fondent une congrégation plus exigeante, suscitant de nombreuses vocations. Leur conception de la vie monastique se rapproche de celle d'un Dandini qui dénonçait les 'abus' et préconisait au patriarche maronite, à la fin du xvi<sup>e</sup> siècle, des réformes telles que la création d'un noviciat, une année conclue par les trois vœux. Ce projet des autorités romaines et des missionnaires latins aboutit en 1736 avec le synode libanais (réuni pour réformer l'Église maronite sur le modèle tridentin) qui déploie des dispositions en ce sens, sous l'influence de Joseph Assemani (1687–1768), savant maronite romain et légat pontifical au synode.<sup>50</sup>

Les monachismes orientaux catholiques s'inventent dans ces échanges entre les communautés du Proche-Orient et Rome, lieu de gouvernement des Églises orientales et capitale pour la science orientaliste. La papauté entend d'abord gouverner ces Églises récemment (sauf les maronites) revenues dans le giron catholique : elle est souvent sollicitée pour trancher des litiges internes ou des disputes entre des groupes qui partagent les mêmes territoires. Pour cela, les dicastères, en particulier la congrégation *de Propaganda Fide*,

49 B. Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la Réforme catholique* (Rome, 1994) ; S. Mohasseb-Saliba, 'Nouvelles Églises, nouvelles interactions. Le Liban de premiers ordres religieux orientaux (xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle)', dans *Interactions, emprunts, confrontations chez les religieux (Antiquité tardive-fin du xix<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, éd. S. Excoffon et al. (Saint-Étienne, 2015), pp. 405–20 (qui renvoie à la bibliographie) ; Girard et Mohasseb-Saliba, 'La naissance des ordres réformés basilienns'.

50 Georges-Joseph Mahfoud, *L'organisation monastique dans l'Église maronite* (Beyrouth, 1967) ; *Le Synode libanais de 1736*, éd. Elias Atallah, 2 vols. (Paris, 2002), 2 : 317–51.

s'appuient sur les savoirs antiques et orientalistes élaborés en Occident : ils définissent ce que l'Orient chrétien devrait être (ce qu'il fut à l'origine selon les autorités pontificales) et, par conséquent, le sens que doivent prendre les réformes à mener. Toutefois ces savoirs ne bousculent jamais les cadres tridentins. Ainsi la situation traditionnelle du monachisme oriental présentant une autonomie relative des monastères les uns par rapport aux autres est connue. Mais le concile de Latran IV et le concile de Trente ont imposé l'institution de congrégations, regroupant plusieurs monastères, régies par des statuts précis de sorte qu'il n'y ait plus de monastères autocéphales.<sup>51</sup> D'une part, la création d'une grande congrégation constituerait une incitation à un meilleur respect de la stricte observance monastique. Des moines plus nombreux et une multiplicité de maisons permettent de contourner des difficultés propres à la vie communautaire et de changer les frères de lieux. D'autre part, la communauté ainsi renforcée résisterait plus vigoureusement aux hérétiques et aux schismatiques, tout en étant plus efficace dans l'apostolat.<sup>52</sup> Le dicastère romain exige une mise aux normes tridentines des monastères orientaux qui se déploie dans des constitutions régulant précisément la vie monastique, en s'inspirant des modèles éprouvés en Occident.

En même temps, le respect du rite oriental et la prohibition de la latinisation sont des consignes incessamment rappelées par les autorités pontificales aux missionnaires et aux chrétiens unis.<sup>53</sup> Ainsi pour la papauté, un moine de rite grec est incontestablement un basilien qui suit la 'règle' de saint Basile.<sup>54</sup> Rome contribue ainsi à 'basilianiser' le monachisme melkite grec-catholique. D'ailleurs la multiplication des *Ascétiques* de saint Basile en arabe est précisément contemporaine de la création des ordres basiliens. Alors qu'il réside au couvent Notre-Dame de la Navicella à Rome, le hiéromoine šuwayrite Ṭāwufilus Fāris (mort 1745) traduit le *Grand Askétikon*, en se fondant sur l'édition mauriste. En 1745, la typographie polyglotte de la congrégation de *Propaganda Fide* publie l'ouvrage sous le titre *Kitāb al-qawānīn al-ruhbānīya al-muntashira wa-'l-mukhtaṣara* (*Livre des règles monastiques développées et abrégées*).<sup>55</sup>

51 Chapitre VIII de la Session XXV du Concile de Trente : *Les conciles œcuméniques*, éd. G. Alberigo, 3 vols. (Paris, 1994), 2 : 779.

52 Archives de la Congrégation de *Propaganda Fide*, SC Greci-Melchiti 4, fols. 9r-12v.

53 A. Girard, '*Nihil esse innovandum ?* Maintien des rites orientaux et négociation de l'Union des Églises orientales avec Rome (fin XVI<sup>e</sup>-mi-XVIII<sup>e</sup> s.)', dans *Réduire le schisme ? Ecclésiologies et politiques de l'Union entre Orient et Occident, XIII<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, éd. M.-H. Blanchet et F. Gabriel (Paris, 2012), pp. 337-52.

54 Benoît XIV, 'Demandatam', dans P. Gasparri, *Codicis juris canonici fontes*, 9 vols. (Rome, 1933), 1 : 795-803; 801.

55 Fedwick, *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis*, III : 179-184 et 549.

Ce gouvernement des communautés orientales s'appuie sur l'érudition catholique et sur une littérature spécifiquement romaine produite par des auteurs savants souvent investis aussi dans des fonctions curiales. Au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, c'est le cas de Lucas Holstenius. Au siècle suivant, Joseph Assemani apporte une contribution majeure à cette science romaine avec son inachevée *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana* : la dissertation consacrée aux nestoriens (un volume de 1000 pages) comprend un chapitre consacré au monachisme, occasion pour le bibliothécaire de présenter une synthèse de l'histoire du monachisme oriental. Le monachisme syrien, fondé par Hilarion disciple d'Antoine, y est inscrit dans la filiation égyptienne. Assemani insiste sur l'organisation monastique en puisant dans la littérature normative, tel le *Nomocanon* d'Ébedjésus de Nisibe.<sup>56</sup> La science romaine profite en outre de capacités éditoriales en langues orientales pour éditer tant des sommes d'érudition que des ouvrages destinés aux Églises orientales (règles et constitutions monastiques etc.). Enfin la capitale pontificale constitue un lieu de passage et surtout de formation pour les chrétiens orientaux qui prennent ainsi connaissance des savoirs orientalistes. Par exemple Yūsuf Bābila, melkite originaire de Sidon envoyé par Mgr Aftīmyūs Ṣayfī à Rome au collège Urbain en 1712, traduit en 1727 en arabe le florilège de conseils ascétiques choisis dans les œuvres de Basile de Césarée, composé à la demande du pape par Bessarion (1403–1472) pour les monastères italo-grecs.<sup>57</sup>

Au Mont Liban, les réformateurs orientaux s'inspirent des ordres occidentaux, en particulier des missionnaires carmes et jésuites qu'ils fréquentent. Les constitutions de l'ordre libanais maronite sont empruntées aux règles de ces religieux ainsi qu'aux pères paulins.<sup>58</sup> En 1732, Clément XII approuve, par la constitution *Apostolatus officium*, les règles et constitutions de l'ordre libanais

56 Joseph Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana*, 3 vols. (Rome, 1728), 3.2 : 857–919.

57 J. Nasrallah, 'Dossier arabe des œuvres de saint Basile dans la littérature melchite', *Proche-Orient chrétien*, 29 (1979), 18–43 ; 22–23 ; id., *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Église melchite du V<sup>e</sup> au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (désormais HMLEM), 4.2 : 151–5. Deux copies sont conservées au monastère Saint Sauveur de Joun : le manuscrit OBS [Ordre basilien salvatorien] 1216 (1739) et le manuscrit OBS 1218 (1737) qui débute par la préface de Bessarion. Pour ces manuscrits, le catalogue de la bibliothèque associe à Bābila un autre auteur, Bāsīlyūs Fīnān, un élève de Ṣayfī, évêque titulaire de Bāniyās (1724–1752) dont la résidence était au couvent Saint Sauveur. Sur le florilège de Bessarion, voir A. Peters-Custot, 'Bessarion et le monachisme italo-grec : l'Orient en Italie du Sud ?', *Cahiers d'études italiennes*, 25 (2017), en ligne : <<http://cei.revues.org/3616>>.

58 G. Chedid, *L'origine delle costituzioni dell'ordine libanese maronita* (Rome, 1966).

maronite qui sont imprimées à Rome en 1735 en arabe *garshūnī* et en latin.<sup>59</sup> Toutefois la référence à une tradition orientale n'en est pas moins présente. Ainsi, les deux ordres grecs-catholiques rivaux, šuwayrites et salvatoriens, se disputent sur la véritable règle de saint Basile.<sup>60</sup> Par ailleurs, au début du long processus d'élaboration des constitutions, des moines maronites se rendent en 1699 à Qannūbīn chez le patriarche Duwayhī pour solliciter l'approbation des règles. D'après le récit de 'Abdallāh Qarā'alī, le patriarche l'accorde tout en ajoutant une clause : 'nous ne dispensons pas nos fils les moines des règles de saint Antoine'. Les moines refusent 'nous excusant auprès du patriarche de ce que les règles de saint Antoine sont multiples et variées, et que la plupart concernent plutôt des ermites que des cénobites.' Duwayhī ne les en dispense pas et laisse provisoirement les moines sans règle approuvée.<sup>61</sup> Il fut en effet formé à Rome où l'on considère que les moines maronites suivent la règle de saint Antoine et que le texte de cette règle existe bien, puisqu'il a été publié par Ecchellensis et Holstenius.

La construction de la figure éponyme de l'Église maronite, le saint ermite Maron de Cyr, par le patriarche historien Duwayhī montre comment l'invention d'une tradition orientale justifie l'organisation monastique décalquée des ordres latins. À la fin du troisième chapitre du premier livre de l'histoire des maronites, Duwayhī rédige une vie originale du saint maronite, 'supérieur des ermitages et des couvents dans la région de Cyr', éloignée à certains égards de sa source principale, l'*Histoire Philothée* de Théodoret de Cyr découverte via l'érudition occidentale. Alors que le charisme de l'ermite attire les foules à lui dans la version de Théodoret, Duwayhī présente quant à lui un Maron quittant son lieu de retraite pour visiter les moines cénobites et les ermites, tel un supérieur pour tous ses religieux.<sup>62</sup> Cette réécriture de la vie de Maron plaide pour

59 *Regulae et constitutiones monachorum Syrorum Maronitarum Ordinis S. Antonii Abbatis, Congregationis Montis Libani a Sanctissimo D.N. Clemente XII. Pont. Max. Literis Apostolicis confirmatae* (Rome, 1735). L'un des exemplaires consultés, conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale universitaire de Strasbourg, a été acquis à Rome par l'orientaliste danois Jakob Georg Christian Adler en 1781 qui note sur la première page du livre 'Liber eximiae raritatis et praestantior reliquis ordinum regulis ob harum antiquitatem. Exemplaria fere omnia inter Maronitas sunt distributa.' L'ouvrage porte une deuxième marque de possession datée de 1836, celle de l'orientaliste allemand Emil Rödiger (1801–1874), professeur à Halle puis à Berlin. Après 1870, il rejoint les fonds de la Kaiserliche Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek zu Straßburg. Sur le voyage d'Adler, voir J. G. C. Adler, *Kurze Uebersicht seiner biblischkritischen Reise nach Rom* (Altona, 1783).

60 Girard et Mohasseb-Saliba, 'La naissance des ordres réformés basiliens'.

61 *Mémoires de 'Abdallāh Qarā'alī fondateur de l'ordre Maronite archevêque Maronite de Beyrouth*, trad. J. Mahfouz (Jounieh, 2007), pp. 40–41.

62 BAV, MS Vatican syriaque 397, fols. 11v–12r ; P. Rouhana, *La Vision des origines religieuses*

l'organisation monastique souhaitée par les élites maronites occidentalises : des congrégations hiérarchiquement organisées regroupant les monastères sous la tutelle d'un abbé général. Ce portrait du saint fondateur de l'Église maronite en supérieur de la vie religieuse s'inspire, d'une part, de la vie de saint Antoine rapportée par la biographie d'Athanase d'Alexandrie, d'autre part, du modèle occidental du saint fondateur, législateur et supérieur d'un ordre religieux. En outre, les sources dont dispose Duwayhī indiquent que le couvent de Saint-Maron exerce la fonction d'exarque sur les couvents de Syrie seconde. Cette primauté du couvent de Saint-Maron sert de modèle pour la réforme du monachisme maronite au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle : Joseph Assemani, dans son introduction aux Constitutions des moines de l'Ordre libanais maronite approuvées par Rome en 1732, explique à ces derniers que la primauté de l'Abbé général sur les supérieurs des couvents de sa Congrégation est semblable à celle qu'exerce l'abbé du couvent de Saint-Maron sur les supérieurs des couvents de Syrie. Il commet une comparaison anachronique au profit de structures monastiques hautement centralisées selon un modèle occidental.<sup>63</sup>

En 1705, Qarā'alī, désormais supérieur général de la communauté, stabilise la cérémonie du port du capuchon<sup>64</sup> et adopte 'la formule des vœux monastiques en usage chez les pères carmes, parce que nous l'avons estimée la plus adaptée à notre cas'.<sup>65</sup> L'année suivante, il appelle sa communauté 'Ordre Libanais', précisant 'les moines seraient appelés libanais par rapport au Mont-Liban, comme les pères carmes s'appellent carmélites'.<sup>66</sup> Si 'Abdallāh Qarā'alī a pu rencontrer les carmes à Alep, il est plus probable qu'il les fréquente dans la montagne libanaise. Le monastère de Saint-Elisée est récupéré par les moines de l'Ordre libanais dès 1696. Cette cohabitation des moines maronites et des carmes inspire un renouveau de l'érémisme chez les premiers : la réforme catholique incite donc aussi à renouer avec la spiritualité du désert, attribuée à la tradition orientale, mais régie par des règles et organisée par un ordre religieux. Dans sa chronique *Ta'rikh al-azmina* ('histoire des temps'), Istifān al-Duwayhī accorde une place conséquente à l'évocation des ermites maronites à travers les siècles. Si la chronique commence en 622 avec les débuts de l'islam, le premier ermite mentionné par le patriarche n'intervient qu'en 1096.<sup>67</sup>

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*des Maronites entre le xve et le xviii<sup>e</sup> siècles : de l'évêque Gabriel Ibn al Qilā'i au patriarche Étienne Douaihy*, thèse non publiée (Institut Catholique de Paris, 1998), pp. 257–61.

63 *Regulae et constitutiones*, p. 15.

64 *Ibid.*, pp. 209–20. La traduction française est publiée dans Mahfoud, *L'organisation monastique de l'Église maronite*, pp. 375–83.

65 'Abdallāh Qarā'alī, *Mémoires*, pp. 82–3.

66 *Ibid.*, pp. 92–3.

67 BAV, Vat. syr. 215, fol. 24r.

D'après l'historien, c'est surtout au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle que l'on assiste à une véritable floraison de l'érémisme sous l'influence d'un certain Yūnān al-Matrīṭī.<sup>68</sup> Enfin Duwayhī ajoute une notice hagiographique sur l'ermitte provençal Chasteuil à l'année 1644, date de sa mort, marquant son entrée dans la mémoire arabe maronite.<sup>69</sup>

Dès 1716, deux moines de l'Ordre libanais demandent à vivre en ermites. Le supérieur général les envoie dans la vallée de Quzḥayya. Mais loin de sortir du cadre de l'ordre, ils reçoivent des règles 'plus fortement serrées' de 'Abdallāh Qarā'ālī alors qu'auparavant il n'existait ni constitutions ni règles particulières aux ermites. L'ermitte doit avoir passé déjà au moins cinq ans dans l'ordre. À l'ermitage, il ne doit pas être seul, mais les ermites ne peuvent pas être plus de trois à vivre ensemble. Les ermites sont tenus de se rendre au monastère pour les fêtes importantes (Noël, Pâques et la saint Antoine). Même l'ascèse des ermites est clairement déterminée par une règle : interdiction de se raser, fortes exigences en matière de jeûne et d'abstinence et un sommeil très limité.<sup>70</sup> Toutes ces mesures sont reprises par les constitutions de l'ordre approuvées par Rome en 1732. Et ces points sur les ermites se retrouvent encore synthétiquement dans le synode libanais de 1736 dans le chapitre consacré au monachisme.<sup>71</sup>

Avant les réformes, au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, les chrétiens de Syrie disposent de monastères dans lesquels les moines vivent selon une observance traditionnelle peu formalisée suivant des règles attribuées à saint Antoine ou saint Basile mais sans véritables constitutions monastiques. Il n'y a ni vœux, ni période de noviciat, ni office en commun. Les congrégations centralisées n'existent pas, mais le paysage monastique se présente sous la forme de petites communautés, parfois très restreintes, indépendantes les unes des autres. Les moines catholiques réformateurs dotent leurs communautés de constitutions précises qui organisent les ordres sur des modèles occidentaux, tout en affirmant renouer avec une tradition orientale antonienne pour les maronites ou basilienne pour les melkites. Rome, capitale savante et lieu de gouvernement, contribue à ce double processus d'occidentalisation et de réinvention d'une identité orientale en exigeant des cadres tridentins pour ces nouvelles congrégations et la fidélité aux traditions orientales mieux connues par l'érudition catholique.

68 Ibid., fols. 108r. et sq.

69 Ibid., fol. 143v. ; P. Sfeir, *Les ermites dans l'église maronite. Histoire et spiritualité* (Kaslik, 1991).

70 'Abdallāh Qarā'ālī, *Mémoires*, pp. 130–31. La traduction française de la règle est publiée dans Mahfoud, *L'organisation monastique de l'Eglise maronite*, pp. 276–7.

71 Atallah, *Le synode libanais de 1736*, 2: 341–3.

#### 4 Conclusion

Le regard occidental sur les communautés monastiques au Proche-Orient est teinté d'une ambiguïté bien ordinaire lorsqu'il est question des chrétiens de Terre Sainte : d'un côté ermites et moines sont autant d'Antoine le Grand et de Basile de Césarée, d'un autre côté cette vie religieuse est jugée décadente et doit être réformée. La controverse confessionnelle conduit à travailler sur l'histoire du monachisme orientale, pour en écrire l'histoire et en connaître les grandes figures. Seulement la science catholique ne se départit jamais des catégories façonnées pour penser le cénobitisme occidental, surévaluant la normativité de 'règles' qui auraient été écrites par les fondateurs Antoine ou Basile. Si les ordres catholiques orientaux fondés au tournant des XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles s'inspirent des missionnaires européens, il est impropre de parler d'une 'latinisation' : le gouvernement romain qui entend contrôler les règles et constitutions de ces nouveaux ordres exige qu'ils restent fidèles aux traditions orientales, mises au jour par l'érudition catholique. Les réformateurs alépins partagent ce point de vue : le retour aux sources doit les conformer aux règles de l'Église catholique. La capitale pontificale est centrale dans cette circulation des hommes, érudits, missionnaires et chrétiens orientaux, ainsi que des textes, manuscrits collectés au Proche-Orient pour enrichir les collections ou livres édités à Rome pour être envoyés sur l'autre rive méditerranéenne.

La réflexion sur les 'règles' monastiques orientales pourrait être élargie à un travail sur la circulation des 'classiques' de la spiritualité orientale tel le *Pré spirituel* de Jean Moschus (550–619) ou l'*Échelle sainte* de Jean Climaque (v. 579–v. 649). D'une part ces ouvrages sont largement diffusés et traduits en Occident, très lus par les ermites et les religieux tels les jésuites et les carmes, mais aussi par les laïcs. D'autre part, les collections de manuscrits arabes témoignent d'une redécouverte de cette spiritualité orientale aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles, peut-être médiatisée ou stimulée par l'intérêt et le travail des Latins pour ces textes. Si l'écriture des règles et constitutions monastiques concerne d'abord les communautés rattachées à Rome, une telle invention des classiques orientaux semble toucher également les Églises non catholiques.

#### Reconnaissance

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## *Historia Literaria Alcorani: Two Lutheran Scholars Chronicling Oriental Scholarship at the Turn of the Eighteenth Century*

*Asaph Ben-Tov*

By the turn of the eighteenth century European students of Oriental languages had reason to look back with satisfaction at the advances made in their field since the Renaissance. The study of Hebrew had long since established itself as a staple of European scholarship, together with Aramaic and Syriac. A command of Arabic, though hardly ubiquitous, had made enormous strides since the beginning of the seventeenth century and was clearly more widespread by 1700 than has been previously assumed.<sup>1</sup> Grammars and printed texts were now available for Samaritan and Coptic, and the second half of the seventeenth century witnessed pioneering work in Geez and Amharic. Recent scholarship has traced the emergence of the European study of the Qur'an in the Middle Ages and later through the Reformation to modern times—a chapter in European scholarship fascinating for its philological intricacies and the intellectual complexities and ambivalence it entailed.

Scholarly communities, early modern and others, are often meticulous chroniclers of their own efforts. Early eighteenth-century Orientalists, looking back at the history of their discipline (which they often did), had much to document. Some of these accounts remain in manuscript and were meant as extended biographical tools for the scholar and his immediate circle,<sup>2</sup> others were published. The present article is concerned with a series of published accounts of the history of Qur'an studies composed and published on the threshold of the eighteenth century by two Lutheran theologians and Orientalists: Zacharias Grapius (1671–1713) of Rostock and Johann Michael Lange (1664–1731) of Altdorf. While they were working independently of each other

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- 1 See most recently J. Loop et al., eds., *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2017). J. Fück's account of Arabic studies still offers a superb overview: *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1955).
  - 2 A good example for this is offered by the Halle Orientalist Christian Benedict Michaelis (1680–1764), father of the better-known Göttingen scholar Johann David Michaelis, who compiled an extensive bibliographical account of Arabic studies, *De fatis linguae Arabicae*, extant in manuscript, with additions by another hand: Franckesche Stiftung Halle, shelf-mark J29:09.

and differ in their approach to the subject, both were consciously taking part in the same academic undertaking labelled *historia literaria*, understood to be part of a Baconian programme for the advancement of learning. Francis Bacon had famously called for a history of letters (in the sense of a systematic account of previous scholarly attempts and achievements) as a requisite for the advancement of learning in a given field. This, in other words, was a taking stock of past scholarship with an eye to its future development. Bacon's argument was well heeded in Germany in the later seventeenth century where *historiae litterariae* became a prominent part of scholarly output and academic teaching,<sup>3</sup> which, in modern times, are either portrayed as precursors of eighteenth-century encyclopedias or, conversely, as the barren fruit of a fossilized form of Baroque polymathy.<sup>4</sup> Grapius and Lange's *historiae litterariae Alcorani*, all formal dissertations defended respectively in Rostock and Altdorf by their students, but authored solely or primarily by the professors, would have been identified by contemporaries as part of a broader academic preoccupation with *historiae litterariae*, a scholarly practice associated in Germany at the time above all with the Kiel polymath Daniel Georg Morhof (1639–1691) and his massive *Polyhistor* (1688–1708).<sup>5</sup> As early modern disputations and dissertations, academic *historiae litterariae* were generically concerned with definitions; thus, in addition to chronicling achievements in a given sphere of learning, they also offered what their authors considered to be a definitive set of definitions clarifying the contours of a particular field of scholarship. Ignorance of *historia literaria*, writers around 1700 cautioned their readers repeatedly, would lead to fundamental confusion and misconceptions. This point, as we shall see, is made forcefully in Grapius's *Historia literaria Alcorani* (1701).

Both Grapius and Lange were writing about the history of Qur'an scholarship in Europe after a series of path-breaking achievements in the field, some

3 See P. Nelles, "Historia litteraria" at Helmstedt: Books, Professors and Students in the Early Enlightenment University', in *Die Praktiken der Gelehrsamkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. M. Mulsow and H. Zedelmaier (Tübingen, 2001), pp. 147–75.

4 The *historia literaria* in its German context, especially with regard to the burgeoning histories of philosophy in the early eighteenth century, has benefited from considerable scholarly attention in recent years. See M. Gierl, 'Bestandaufnahme im gelehrten Bereich: Zur Entwicklung der "Historia literaria" im 18. Jahrhundert', in *Denkhorizonte und Handlungsspielräume. Historische Studien für Rudolf Vierhaus zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. K.A. Vogel (Göttingen, 1992), pp. 53–80, and F. Grunert and F. Vollhardt, eds., *Historia Literaria: Neuordnungen des Wissens im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 2007).

5 On Morhof see F. Waquet, ed., *Mapping the World of Learning: The Polyhistor of Daniel Georg Morhof* (Wiesbaden, 2000). See also A. Grafton 'The World of the Polyhistor: Humanism and Encyclopedism', *Central European History*, 18 (1985), 31–47, reprinted in id., *Bring Out Your Dead: The Past as Revelation* (Cambridge MA, 2001), pp. 166–80.

of them recent. They were also writing as Lutheran theologians acutely aware of the confessional context of this scholarship. While a comprehensive history of the Qur'an in Europe up to the first decade of the eighteenth century is well beyond the scope of this paper, a brief and selective sketch of these developments leading up to Grapius and Lange may be useful to understand their intentions and the very status of Qur'an scholarship as a subject of learned discourse around 1700.

The Qur'an had been studied by several medieval scholars, and a complete Latin translation was carried out in the twelfth century by Robert of Ketton.<sup>6</sup> The early modern history of Qur'an translations and editions in Christian Europe begins in earnest in 1543 with the printing in Basel of a revised version of Ketton's translation by the Zurich scholar Theodor Bibliander and the Basel printer Johannes Oporinus.<sup>7</sup> Four hundred years after its completion Ketton's Latin version of the Qur'an was printed and became the focus of sustained scholarly attention.<sup>8</sup> The printing of the 'Turkish Bible' in the sixteenth century was a contested undertaking, and permission to do so was granted only after the intervention of Martin Luther himself, who interceded with the city council of Basel on behalf of Bibliander and Oporinus. Both Luther and Philipp Melanchthon contributed prefaces to this Latin edition.<sup>9</sup> Endorsing the publication of the Qur'an, needless to say, in no way implied that the two Reformers, or indeed its publishers, approved of it. Quite the contrary. For both Reformers publishing the 'Turkish Bible' was an act of unmasking. The following comment from Luther's introduction to the 1543 edition illustrates this well:

... just as I have already written and shall continue to write against the idols of the Jews and Papists, as much as my talent allows, so I have begun confuting the noxious teachings of Muhammad and shall carry on doing so to a greater extent. It is furthermore helpful to anyone who intends to do so to become acquainted with Muhammad's writings. I therefore

6 See T.E. Burman, *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom, 1400-1560* (Philadelphia, 2007); Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa*, pp. 3-9, and C. Burnett, 'Ketton, Robert of', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), online via <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/23723>.

7 On Bibliander and Oporinus's publication of Ketton's translation and the ensuing controversy see H. Bobzin, *Der Koran im Zeitalter der Reformation. Studien zur Frühgeschichte der Arabistik und Islamkunde in Europa* (Stuttgart, 1995), pp. 159-275.

8 For an overview of early modern Qur'an translations see H. Bobzin, 'Translations of the Qur'an', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, 5, ed. J.D. McAuliffe (Leiden, 2006), pp. 340-58, as well as id., 'Latin Translations of the Koran: A Short Overview', *Der Islam*, 70:2 (1993), 193-206.

9 Martin Luther, *Werke*, 73 vols. (Weimar, 1883-2009), 53: 569-72, and Philipp Melanchthon, *Opera quae supersunt omnia*, 'Corpus reformatorum', ed. K.G. Bretschneider et al., 28 vols. (Halle, 1834-1860), 5: 10-13.

wished I were able to see the Qur'an in its entirety. I am in no doubt that when other pious and learned men read it, they will curse both its errors and the very name of Muhammad all the more. For just as the Jews' vanity, or rather their insanity, was better perceived once their secrets had been revealed, thus with Muhammad's book brought to light and all its parts collated, all pious men will better appreciate his insanity and will be better able to refute the Devil's venom. This is my reason for wishing to see this book published.<sup>10</sup>

Melanchthon in his preface is no kinder. This harsh polemic, however, had its positive side: a recurring argument, which was to be repeated into the eighteenth century, ran along the lines of 'know thy enemy'; both Luther and Melanchthon insist that the Qur'an was so preposterous that making it available in European languages was tantamount to exposure. Pious Christians therefore need not fear its publication. Motivated by religious polemics and a shrill confidence in one's own possession of religious truth, it was a clear stand (in this case) against obscurantism and censorship.

The printing in 1543 of Robert of Ketton's twelfth-century translation spurred further interest in the Qur'an. In 1547 an Italian translation of Ketton's version was published in Venice by Andrea Arrivabene.<sup>11</sup> The Italian was translated in to German by the Nuremberg preacher Salomon Schweigger;<sup>12</sup> and the first Dutch translation (1641) was made from Schweigger's German. André du Ryer's French translation, made directly from Arabic, appeared in 1647,<sup>13</sup> and was in turn used for the English rendition of 1649.<sup>14</sup>

10 Luther, *Werke*, 53: 570: 'Ego igitur ut contra Iudaeorum et Papistarum idola scripsi et scribam pro dono mihi concesso, ita et pestiferas Mahometi opiniones confutare coepi et confutabo prolixius. Sed id acturo prodest etiam inspicere ipsum scriptum Mahometi. Ideo optavi, ut viderem integrum Alcorani codicem. Nec dubito quin, cum alij pij et docti legent, magis execraturi sint et errores et nomen Mahometi. Ut enim Iudaeorum vanitas, vel amentia potius, magis deprehensa est prolatis eorum arcanis, ita prolato Mahometi libro pij omnes collatis omnibus partibus magis deprehendent insaniam et Diaboli virus et facilius refutare poterunt. Haec me movit, ut extare librum optarim.'

11 *L'Alcorano di Macometto, nel qual si contiene la dottrina, la vita, i costume, et le leggi sue* (Venice, 1547). See P. M. Tommasino, *The Venetian Qur'an: A Renaissance Companion to Islam*, tr. Sylvia Notini (Philadelphia, 2018).

12 *Alcoranus Mahometicus: das ist, der Türcken Alcoran, Religion und Aberglauben* (Nuremberg, 1616). On Schweigger see A. Schunka's article in *Frühe Neuzeit in Deutschland 1520-1620 Literaturwissenschaftliches Verfasserlexikon*, 5, ed. W. Köhlmann et al. (Berlin, 2016), s.v.

13 *L'Alcoran de Mahomet* (Paris, 1647). On André du Ryer and his translation of the Quran see A. Hamilton and F. Richard, *André du Ryer and Oriental Studies in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford, 2004), esp. ch. 4.

14 *The Alcoran of Mahomet* (London, 1649). On the disputed identity of the English translator

In addition to these Latin and vernacular translations of the entire Qur'an, meant (especially in the case of vernacular versions) for a broader readership, there were in the seventeenth century a series of learned attempts at editing, translating into Latin, and commentating limited portions of the text. Among such *specimina* we find Thomas Erpenius's sura 17 (Joseph, 1617)<sup>15</sup> and 64 (The Deceit, 1620),<sup>16</sup> and Christian Ravius's sura 2 (The Cow, 1646).<sup>17</sup> In some cases these *specimina* were intended as a foretaste of a forthcoming complete Qur'an translation, which almost invariably, failed to follow. This list of Qur'anic *specimina* could be extended considerably. It is worth noting that while some of these snippets enjoyed fairly wide circulation, others had a small print run and could have been read by a modest number of scholars. They are, nonetheless, dutifully listed by compilers of *historiae literariae*, who probably never had a chance to consult some of them. Of particular interest in this context is the Zwickau schoolmaster Johann Zechendorff (1580–1662), who published two brief Qur'anic *specimina*, using for the Arabic text coarse wooden types, carved by one of his pupils.<sup>18</sup> Zechendorff also left behind a Latin translation of the entire Qur'an, which remained in manuscript and was almost entirely unknown until its recent discovery in Cairo.<sup>19</sup> Grapius, as we shall see, was aware of its existence—though he had probably not seen it for himself.

In 1694, when Lange and Grapius were still students, the Hamburg pastor and Orientalist Abraham Hinckelmann (1652–1695) published an edition of the entire Arabic text of the Qur'an, adding a lengthy preface, which, while typically offering a 'refutation of Muhammedanism', nonetheless took a far more nuanced and better informed view of the Qur'an and Islam than the

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see N. Malcom, 'The 1649 English Translation of the Koran: Its Origins and Significance', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 75 (2012), 261–95, and M. Feingold, 'The Turkish Alcoran': New Light on the 1649 English Translation', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 75:4 (2012), 475–501.

- 15 Thomas Erpenius, *Historia Josephi Patriarchae, ex Alcorano, Arabice cum triplici versione Latina, & scholijs* (Leiden, 1617).
- 16 Appended to the second edition of his Thomas Erpenius, *Rudimenta linguae arabicae* (Leiden, 1620).
- 17 Christian Ravius, *Prima tredecim partium Alcorani Arabico-Latini* (Amsterdam, 1646).
- 18 Johann Zechendorff, *Specimen Suratarum, id est, Capitum aliquot ex Alcorani systemate* (Zwickau, 1638) (suras 61 and 78) and id., *Suratae unius atque alterius textum ejusque explicationem ex commentario quodam arabe dogmata Alcorani* (Zwickau, [1647?]) (suras 101 and 103). See A. Ben-Tov, 'Johann Zechendorff (1580–1662) and Arabic Studies at Zwickau's Latin School', in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe*, ed. J. Loop et al. (Leiden, 2017), pp. 57–92.
- 19 R. Tottoli, 'The Latin Translation of the Qur'an by Johann Zechendorff (1580–1662) Discovered in Cairo Dār al-Kutub. A Preliminary Description', *Oriente Moderno*, 95 (2015), 5–31, and R. Gleis, 'A presumed lost Latin translation of the Qur'an (Johann Zechendorff)', *Neulatainisches Jahrbuch*, 18 (2016), 361–72.

traditional Christian invectives which were still common at the time.<sup>20</sup> Hinckelmann's edition was a considerable achievement, and yet a far more significant milestone followed at its heels shortly after the Hamburg pastor's untimely death. This did not emerge from the Protestant printing presses of Northern Europe but from Padua. Ludovico Marracci (1612–1700), a clergyman, professor of Oriental languages at La Sapienza and confessor to Pope Innocent XI, published in 1698 his edition of the Arabic text of the Qur'an with his Latin translation, accompanied by numerous *Tafsir* and refutation.<sup>21</sup> Marracci's achievement was appreciated on both sides of the confessional divide, and served as the basis for several vernacular versions, among them the Lutheran David Nerreter's 1703 German version,<sup>22</sup> and George Sale's 1734 English translation.<sup>23</sup> In 1721 Marracci's Latin translation (without the original Arabic) was published in Leipzig by the Lutheran theologian and pedagogue Christian Reineccius, thus making it available (and affordable) to a broader scholarly readership, interested in a Latin rendering of the Qur'an but not in the Arabic original. European efforts at editing and translating the Qur'an can be claimed as a fine achievement of the Republic of Letters soliciting a cross confessional process of learning and mutual pollination. While doubtless true, this, however, is only half the truth.

As Alastair Hamilton has shown, prominent Protestant scholars, among them Leibniz, were eager, even after the appearance of Marracci's translation, to see the Qur'an translated into Latin by a Protestant.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the most ambitious attempt was announced by the Breslau Orientalist Andreas Acoluthus (1654–1704),<sup>25</sup> who undertook the compilation of a polyglot Qur'an which would offer, alongside the original Arabic, the Turkish and Persian versions

20 Abraham Hinckelmann, *Al-Coranus S. Lex Islamica, Muhammedis* (Hamburg, 1694).

21 Ludovico Marracci, *Alcorani textus universus* (Padua, 1698). On Marracci see the article by L. Saracco in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, 70 (Rome, 2008), pp. 700–702 and R. Gleib and R. Tottoli, *Ludovico Marracci at Work: The Evolution of his Latin Translation of the Qur'an in the Light of his Newly Discovered Manuscripts. With an Edition and Comparative Linguistic Analysis of Sura 18* (Wiesbaden, 2016).

22 Printed in D. Nerreter, *Neu-eröffnete Mahometanische Moschea* (Nuremberg, 1703).

23 George Sale, *The Koran, Commonly Called the Alcoran of Mohammed* (London, 1734). On Sale's indebtedness to Marracci's translation see A. Bevilacqua, 'The Qur'an Translations of Marracci and Sale', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 76 (2013), 93–130.

24 A. Hamilton, 'A Lutheran Translator for the Quran. A Late Seventeenth-Century Quest', in *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, ed. A. Hamilton et al. (Leiden, 2005), pp. 197–221.

25 On Acoluthus's Qur'anic studies see A. Hamilton, 'After Marracci: The Reception of Ludovico Marracci's Edition of the Qur'an in Northern Europe from the Late Seventeenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 20 (2018), 175–92. For a good biographical-bibliographical overview of Acoluthus see K. Migoń, 'Der Breslauer Orientalist Andreas Acoluthus (1654–1704). Seine Beziehungen zu Leibniz und der Akademie in Berlin', *Sitzungsberichte der Leibniz-Sozietät*, 53 (2002), 45–58.

with a Latin translation of each. The slim, though imposing, *Specimen Alcorani* which he published in 1701 included the polyglot text of the first (and short) sura, based on the collation of no less than thirty manuscripts, with a detailed commentary and a devastating critique of preceding scholarship. This earned Acoluthus a much-coveted membership in the Brandenburg Academy in Berlin.<sup>26</sup> Yet Acoluthus, alas, died three years later without fulfilling his ambitious design. The history of the Qur'an in the early modern Republic of Letters by no means ends here; but with this short sketch in mind, we may now turn to Grapius and Lange and their respective *historiae literariae Alcorani*.

### 1 Zacharias Grapius Jr. (1671–1713), *Historia Literaria Alcorani* (1701)

Zacharias Grapius (Grape), the son a Lutheran theologian of the same name,<sup>27</sup> was born in Rostock, where his father was a professor of logic, physics and metaphysics. Grapius the Elder was appointed to the chair of theology in 1679, yet died two days after this appointment.<sup>28</sup> Grapius the Younger, who studied in Rostock and then in Greifswald and Leipzig, was appointed professor of physics and metaphysics in Rostock in 1699, where, like his father before him, he commenced his theological studies and held several ecclesiastical posts while teaching in the philosophical faculty.<sup>29</sup> In 1713 he was awarded a professorship in the theological faculty, in addition to a superintendence; yet, like his father before him, died shortly afterwards. Grapius had been interested in Oriental languages and taught them during his stay in Leipzig.<sup>30</sup> His extant works gives the impression of a man of broad interests: among them, for instance, we find a dissertation on *The Theology of the Chinese and Its Attempted Reformation by the Jesuits* (1705).<sup>31</sup>

26 Andreas Acoluthus, *Τέτραπλα Αλκορονικά, sive Specimen Alcorani quadrilinguis, Arabici, Persici, Turcici, Latini* (Berlin, 1701). Acoluthus himself, still residing in Breslau, was eager to move to Berlin, and in his correspondence with Gottlieb Milich, a magistrate and coin collector of Schweidnitz, Acoluthus describes his encounter with Friedrich 111/1 of Brandenburg/Prussia and his great hopes for winning his patronage. Forschungsbibliothek Gotha Chart. Gotha Chart. A. 199 fol. 8r-v.

27 Zacharias Grapius the Elder (1637–1679).

28 Among Grapius the Elder's writings is a 1663 Wittenberg dissertation *Dissertatio philologica de accentibus Ebraeorum* (1663).

29 See, e.g., Zacharias Grapius the Younger, *Dissertatio philosophica examinans placita quaedam scripti recentissimi sub titulo: Geologia, sive Natürliche Wissenschaft von Erschaffung und Bereitung der Erd-Kugel* (Rostock, 1700)—a response to Detlev Clüver.

30 See Fromm's article on Grapius the Younger in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (Leipzig, 1875–1912), 9: 584.

31 Zacharias Grapius the Younger, *Dissertatio extero-theologica repraesentans theologiam Sinensium, ejusque reformationem a Jesuitis tentatam* (Rostock, 1708).

Grapius's interest in Islam is well attested. In 1705 he published a letter by the early seventeenth-century Moroccan diplomat Aḥmad ibn 'Abdallāh (1611) addressed to Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange, and to his brother-in-law Immanuel of Portugal, in which the Muslim diplomat articulated his critique of Christian doctrine.<sup>32</sup> Grapius reissued the letter in 1706.<sup>33</sup> The Latin manuscript on which Grapius's edition was based was a transcription of the letter made in 1697 by Georg Heinrich Goetze, who was visiting Oxford at the time and was allowed access to the manuscript among John Selden's papers.<sup>34</sup> It reached Grapius in Rostock via Goetze's brother, the Lübeck superintendent Georg Heinrich Goetze.<sup>35</sup> Grapius was also interested in parallels between rabbinical Judaism and Islam: in 1699 he published a dissertation on the Jewish and Muslim teaching of 'the striking in the grave' (*ḥibbuṭ ha-kever*);<sup>36</sup> and in 1709 he considered the question of whether Abraham had derived circumcision from the Egyptians.<sup>37</sup> Convinced of the importance of the Talmud for Christian scholarship, he composed in 1695, whilst in Leipzig, *A Philological*

32 *Ahmet Ben-Abdala Mohammedani Epistola theologica de articulis quibusdam fidei ad serenissimos Auriacum et Portugalliae principes scripta, e m[anu]s[crip]to Anglico nunc edita notisque ac animadversionibus critico-theologicis, in exercitationibus quibusdam disputatoris ventilates, illustrata passim ac refutata* (Rostock, 1705). See G. Wieggers, 'The Andalusí Heritage in the Maghrib: The Polemical Work of Muhammad Alguazir (fl. 1610)', in *Poetry, Politics and Polemics: Cultural Transfer between the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa*, ed. O. Zwartjes et al. (Amsterdam, 1996), pp. 107–32. On Grapius's publication of this letter and, more broadly, on his polemical fascination with Islam see D. Klein, 'Muslimischer Antitrinitarismus im lutherischen Rostock: Zacharias Grapius der Jüngere und die *Epistola theologica* des Aḥmad bin 'Abdallāh', in *Wahrnehmung des Islam zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung*, ed. D. Klein and B. Platow (Munich, 2008), pp. 41–60. The same letter was published in 1700 in Altdorf—a fact Grapius does not seem to have been aware of: *Mohammedica: sive Dissertatio epistolaris de veritate religionis Christianae per Achmet Benabdalla eruditum Maurum: in qua infidelium illorum objectiones insuslissimae plenissime exponunter* (Altdorf, 1700). A short preface by a certain 'C. Wag, C.F.C.N.' states briefly that it is based on a rare manuscript in Johann Christoph Wagenseil's collection. Wagenseil, though recuperating from an accident and plagued by poor health in 1700, was still alive and very active until his death in 1705. The preface, however, speaks of the author of *Tela ignea Satanae* (Wagenseil) in the third person.

33 The title of this edition concentrates on the question of free will: *Ahmet Ben-Abdala Mohammedani Epist[ola] theologica de libero arbitrio ad Dn. de Aquila scripta, e m[anu]s[crip]to Anglico nunc edita, notisque ac animadversionibus theologicis illustrata passim ac refutata* (Rostock, 1706).

34 Selden had made use of portions of this letter in *De synedriis*. See G.J. Toomer, *John Selden: A Life in Scholarship*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2009), 2: 716.

35 *Ahmet Ben-Abdala Mohammedani Epistola* (1705), p. 2.

36 Zacharias Grapius the Younger, *De Judaeorum et Muhammedanorum Chibbut Hakkebher* (Rostock, 1699).

37 Zacharias Grapius the Younger, *Controversiam recentissimam historicam an circumcisio ab*



*Question: Whether the Talmud should be Burnt* (the answer was no),<sup>38</sup> followed in 1696 by a two part dissertation on *Historia literaria Talmudis Babylonici* (1696).

In 1701, the year in which Acoluthus published his imposing polyglot specimen, Grapius published a dissertation entitled *Historical-Philological Literary History of the Qur'an*.<sup>39</sup> Grapius presided over the dissertation and was probably its author. It was defended at the oral disputation in Rostock in September 1710 by a certain Joachim Mantzel. In a short preface written by Mantzel, the student confirms the necessity of *historia literaria* with recourse to Morhof's *Polyhistor*. It is not only that literary history is useful; for Mantzel and Grapius it is indispensable. Its absence gives rise to confusion and absurdity—bearing in mind that for Grapius *historia literaria* entails not only the history of a given scholarly pursuit but also a clear set of definitions outlining the subject at hand. Thus, Mantzel gleefully recounts instances where the neglect of *historia literaria* led scholars astray: some would-be scholars, for instance, presumed *Cabbala* to be the name of a malevolent old woman who concocted potions; others thought *Moré Nevokhim* (the Hebrew title of Maimonides's *Guide for the Perplexed*) was the name of the work's Arab author. The case of the sixteenth-century Catholic scholar Michael van Isselt, who allegedly mistook *Coranus* for one of Muhammad's names, enabled Mantzel to indulge in scholarly and confessional *Schadenfreude*.<sup>40</sup>

True to academic form, Grapius opens the work with an etymological scrutiny of the term *Qur'an*,<sup>41</sup> typically offering a preliminary account of the Qur'an in the form of a consideration of its Aristotelian 'four causes': formal, material, efficient and final. In considering the Qur'an's formal cause, he distinguishes between an internal and external form. The internal form consists of Muhammad's false claims; for Grapius, these are nothing more than the products of Muhammad's mortal reasoning and fancy, and he quotes with approval the Altdorf Orientalist and theologian Johann Michael Lange, to whom we shall soon turn, that Muhammad excluded from the Qur'an all arguments which were beyond his comprehension. Under external form, Grapius understands the language and style of the Qur'an. While he has nothing but

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*Aegyptis ad Abrahamum fuerit derivata? A Jo. Marshamo Anglo potissimum, & Jo. Spencero motam examinat* (Rostock, 1709).

38 Zacharias Grapius the Younger, *Problema philologicum: An Talmud sit cremandum?* (Leipzig, 1695).

39 Zacharias Grapius the Younger, *Spicilegium historico-philologicum historiam literariam Alcorani, sistens* (Rostock, 1701).

40 Grapius, *Historia literaria Alcorani*, sig. A2r.

41 *Ibid.*, sig. A2v.

contempt for the Qur'an's internal form, he openly concedes that the language and style of the Qur'an are most elegant and pure.<sup>42</sup> At the same time Grapius is here, as on other points, in open agreement with Marracci's claim that the style of the Qur'an is similar to the utterances of a possessed man.<sup>43</sup>

The Qur'an's *causa efficiens* is, for Grapius, none other than Muhammad's malice (*malitia*), inspired by the devil—in stark contrast to Muslims' understanding of the Qur'an's authorship. Grapius is well aware of the centrality of the Muslim tenet of the eternity and uncreatedness of the Qur'an as God's *ip-sissima verba*. He follows a traditional Christian account of the emergence of the the Qur'an, according to which Muhammad developed his teaching bit by bit and was aided, among others, by a certain Sergius—Grapius is not sure to which ancient heresy he belonged, stating that he was either a Nestorian, Jacobite or Arian—as well as by several Jews, before his teaching was consolidated by his immediate successors. The religious system (*systema*) of the Qur'an is a farrago of fragmented opinions. Grapius was joining a long series of Christian readers who were struck by what they perceived to be a chaotic book. Nonetheless, like other early modern Christians, he is willing to concede that some of the points made by Muhammad are useful and well argued: 'Even a blind pigeon occasionally finds a good pea.'<sup>44</sup> The final cause of the Qur'an is uncontested and easy to formulate: *norma religionis & morum*.<sup>45</sup>

Grapius notes that the Qur'an is not printed among Muslims and dwells briefly on the great accuracy and calligraphic achievements of Muslim scribes. It is then that he turns to his main point: the history of European scholars' attempts to edit and translate the book. This raised the almost generic question as to whether printing the Qur'an posed a threat to the Christian commonwealth. This becomes a point of confessional contention, with Grapius enumerating (rather misleadingly) Catholic suppressions of Qur'an publications and even goes back to Cardinal Ximenes's consignment of five thousand volumes of valuable Oriental books to the flames in 1500.<sup>46</sup> Grapius, who several year earlier had argued against the burning of the Talmud and believed in its importance for Christian theologians, affirms emphatically that Christians

42 Ibid., sig. B2v: 'Negandum quidem non est, styli genus breve & concisum, phrasi non inelegans, saepe figuratum, flosculus & sententiis subinde apersis [sic], purum ac elegantissimum esse, si nempe Grammaticas regulas potius quam Rhetorices praecepta, quis aestimare velit.'

43 Ibid., sig. B3r.

44 Ibid., sig. B2r: 'Haecque hactenus recensita, etsi ex parte bona sint & utilia, & apte hic quadret πολυθροῦλλητον illud: Eine blinde Taube findet auch zuweilen eine gute Erbse.'

45 Ibid., sig. B3r.

46 Ibid., sig. C1r-v.

should acquaint themselves with the Qur'an and enlists the support of the recently deceased Catholic Qur'an translator Marracci, an opponent of this obscurantism, but 'otherwise their true companion in matters of religion'.<sup>47</sup> A further objection he wishes to lay to rest is the notion that publishing the Qur'an in Arabic was anathema. This objection was based on the fact that by 1705 only a handful of European scholar had succeeded in publishing the entire Qur'an in Arabic, and many who intended to do so died before completing this undertaking; some, like Thomas Erpenius, dying young. Was this perhaps a sign of divine displeasure? Grapius makes short shrift of this urban legend. If God allowed the publication of the Qur'an in European vernaculars, why not in the original Arabic? He had already allowed it to be published in Arabic in Germany in 1694 (Hinckelmann), why then not again?<sup>48</sup>

Grapius proceeds to list the various Latin and vernacular Qur'an translations which had been made up to his day and enumerates the Muslim commentators of whom he was aware—he probably came across most of them in Marracci's edition. Grapius, writing shortly after the appearance of Marracci's Qur'an (1698) takes a kind view of this achievement and, despite the pervasive anti-Catholic tone of his dissertation, often quotes him with approval. His comment on recent Latin translations of the (entire) Qur'an, however, betrays a subtle strategy we shall encounter elsewhere:

Among the most recent Latin translations, the first place, in order of composition, is held by Zechendorff, sometime headmaster of the Zwickau Latin School, who translated the entire Qur'an into Latin; the manuscript, which Hottinger once saw and praised, is held in Zwickau. It is followed by the work of Marracci, mentioned above, in which the whole of the Qur'an was transcribed from reliable Arabic manuscripts and translated from the Arabic tongue into Latin.<sup>49</sup>

47 Ibid., sig. C1<sup>v</sup>: Nos vero omnino affirmendam esse hanc quaestionem, suffragante P. Marraccio, ipsorum Pontificiorum, alias fidelissimo fidei socio, dicimus. Est enim, enarrantibus *Eruditorum Actis*, modo dictus *Marraccius* totus in eo occupatus, ut neget aliquod incommodum Ecclesiae Christianae ex hoc libro afferri posse, & e contrario potius Daemonis astu factus fuisse existimet, quod Ecclesiae Christi tanto tempore incognitae manserint hostium suorum machinae & arma, quo minus adversus ea sese praemunire potuisset.

48 Ibid., sig. C1<sup>v</sup>.

49 Ibid., sig. C3<sup>v</sup>: Inter recentissimas autem Latinas Versiones, primas ratione ordinis tenet Zechendorfi Scholae Cygnaeae olim Rectoris, qui integrum Coranum Latine vertit, cujus msstum Zwickaviae habetur, quod Hottingerus quondam & vidit, & laudavit. Succedit opus illud Marraccii supra memoratum in quo Alcorani textus universus, ex correctioribus Arabum exemplaribus descriptus, ac ex Arabico idiomate in Latinum est transpositus.

Zechendorff was a remarkable scholar and self-taught Arabist; and his Qur'an scholarship, carried out in relative isolation in Zwickau, is an astounding feat of intellectual curiosity and scholarly perseverance. His translation of the entire Qur'an, as we have seen, went almost completely unnoticed until its recent recovery by Roberto Tottoli.<sup>50</sup> It certainly deserved contemporary admiration (which, with this rare exception, it seems to have seldom elicited); but placing it on a par with Marracci's milestone edition was a wilful distortion—especially considering that Grapius is almost certainly reporting from hear-say and never saw Zechendorff's Zwickau manuscript. The reference to Hottinger is spurious and is probably a misunderstanding: the Swiss scholar Johann Heinrich Hottinger, with whom Zechendorff corresponded, did indeed see the Zwickau schoolmaster's *specimina* and offered his approval of them (not without stating that they were a fine achievement for a *German*)—an endorsement of which Zechendorff was proud and copied into the frontispiece of his Qur'an manuscript.<sup>51</sup> It seems that Grapius's informant in Zwickau saw this Hottinger quote in the Qur'an manuscript and wrongly assumed it meant that Hottinger had seen it. Be that as it may, listing Marracci after the unpublished (and unread) Qur'an translation by the Zwickau schoolmaster (however remarkable it may be) is a deliberate marginalization of the Catholic priest's edition. Grapius was not alone in resenting Marracci's achievement. There is a more pronounced confessional summary of Qur'an scholarship in the works of Grapius's contemporary, Johann Michael Lange—like Grapius, an Orientalist and Lutheran theologian, but unlike Grapius, one who found himself outside the boundaries of Lutheran orthodoxy, an indiscretion which was to cost him dearly.

## 2 Johann Michael Lange (1664–1731): *Historia Literaria* and Polemics

It was in 1703 that things started to go wrong for Johann Michael Lange. The first decades of his life seemed to promise a happy life in the Republic of Letters and in the service of the Lutheran church. Born in Sulzbach in 1664 the son of a learned pastor,<sup>52</sup> he immersed himself in Oriental studies and theology, as well as anatomy and botanical studies in Altdorf, Jena and Halle. After the death of his father in 1689, Lange's mother in 1701 married the

50 Tottoli, 'Latin Translation of the Qur'an'.

51 The same letter is also appended to Zechendorff's *Specimen Suratarum* (1638).

52 Georg Christoph Lange (1636–1689). In 1697 Lange published his late father's *Biblia in tres tabulas redacta* (Altdorf, 1697). See also Lange's reference to his father and this work in his own *Dissertatio de compendiis biblicis* (Altdorf, 1697), p. 16.

sixty-seven-year-old widowed Altdorf Hebraist and theologian Johann Christoph Wagenseil,<sup>53</sup> who seems to have been Lange's mentor and who now became his stepfather.<sup>54</sup> Having served as a Lutheran pastor in the Upper Palatine, in 1697 Lange became a doctor of theology in Altdorf, where he was appointed professor of theology two years later. To these accomplishments can be added his poetical achievements, which led to his admittance to the literary Pegnitz Flower Society (*Pegnesicher Blumenorden*) in 1698.<sup>55</sup> Starting in the late 1690s, Lange produced a steady stream of scholarly output, including a refutation of several Jewish claims about the genealogy of Jesus in 1696,<sup>56</sup> and in the following year a rebuttal of Qur'anic views on the Trinity, *On Mohammedan Fables concerning the Mystery of the Holy Trinity and Generation in Divine Matters*,<sup>57</sup> dedicated to Wagenseil. An interest in Arabic is further evinced in some of his works written in Altdorf during the first years of his professorship there.<sup>58</sup> Notable also is his 1705 *Three Botanical-Theological Dissertations on the Saponaria* (soapwort), combining his botanical interests with a philological scrutiny of attestations of this flower in the Hebrew Bible, along with a broader consideration of rabbinical, Syriac and Arabic sources.<sup>59</sup>

In 1703, in his fortieth year, Lange, together with Wagenseil and several other professors, expressed his support for the itinerant radical Pietist Johann Georg Rosenbach and shortly after hosted the chiliast Johann Wilhelm Petersen in Altdorf and openly espoused his views on apocatastasis (the doctrine of the final restoration of all sinful beings to God and to the state of blessedness).<sup>60</sup>

53 Wagenseil was not only the dedicatee of Lange's 1697 *De fabulis Mohhamaedicis*, but was also the *praeses* (and likely author) of the dissertation presented and defended by Lange in November 1685, *De caractere primaevae bibliorum Ebraicorum*.

54 See P. Blastenbrei, *Johann Christoph Wagenseil und seine Stellung zum Judentum* (Erlangen, 2004), p. 35.

55 C.A. Baader, *Lexikon verstorbener baierischer Schriftsteller des achtzehnten und neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Augsburg, 1824), p. 148 and John Flood, *Poets Laureate in the Holy Roman Empire* (Berlin, 2006), pp. 1072–3.

56 Johann Michael Lange, *De genealogiis nunquam finiendis et fabulis Judaicis* (Nuremberg, 1696).

57 Johann Michael Lange, *De fabulis Mohhamaedicis circa ss. Trinitatis mysterium et generationem in divinis* (Altdorf, 1697).

58 To a limited extent in a 1701 dissertation he composed and supervised תפילות אל המתים *sive De litanis ad defunctos, exercitatio theologica*, pivoting on Isaiah 63:16.

59 Essentially a botanical-philological attempt to gauge the use of *saponaria* mentioned, e.g., in Jeremiah 2:22 and Malachi 3:2—in both cases the Hebrew בורית (*borith*) is translated in the KJV as 'soap'.

60 See Blastenbrei, *Wagenseil*, pp. 35–6, and Georg Andreas Will, *Geschichte und Beschreibung der Nürnbergischen Universität Altdorf* (Altdorf, 1795), pp. 255–6.

This set Lange on a collision course with the defenders of Lutheran orthodoxy in Altdorf and Nuremberg and eventually led to his dismissal from the university and departure from Altdorf in 1709. He spent the rest of his life in Prenzlau, at the north-eastern tip of Brandenburg, where he died in 1731, far removed from his native Franconia and its university.<sup>61</sup> In exile, too, Lange was an active writer, engaged, among other things, in a juridical debate on the permissibility of divorce for Protestant princes;<sup>62</sup> his academic career, however, was over.

Between December of 1703 and June of the following year, just as the Rosenbach affair was erupting, Lange composed three dissertations: literary histories taking stock of the achievements of Western Qur'an scholarship and, more specifically, of attempts by Europeans to edit and translate the Qur'an: *An Historical-Philological-Theological Dissertation concerning the First Arabic Edition of the Qur'an among Europeans, which was Printed in Italy just over a Century and a Half Ago by Paganino of Brescia, but was Destroyed by Order of the Roman Pontiff*, presented in Altdorf on 19 December 1703.<sup>63</sup> It was followed on 16 April 1704 by a dissertation on various editions of portions of the Arabic text of the Qur'an: *A Historical-Philological-Theological Dissertation on the Samples, Various Attempts and Most Recent Achievements of Certain Scholars in Editing the Qur'an in Arabic*.<sup>64</sup> Two months later came the concluding dissertation in this series: *A Historical-Philological-Theological Dissertation on Various Translations*

61 See C.G. Jöcher, *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexikon*, 4 vols. (Leipzig, 1750–1751), 2:2254–5 and C.A. Baader, *Das gelehrte Baiern oder Lexikon aller Schriftsteller, welche Baiern im achzehnten Jahrhundert erzeugte oder ernährte* (Nuremberg and Sulzbach, 1825), pp. 147–50. For an 18th-century account of Lange's career, full of admiration for his scholarship and open disapproval of his non-orthodox religious stance see Georg Anreas Will and Christian Conrad Nopitsch, *Nürnbergisches Gelehrten-Lexicon; oder, Beschreibung aller nürnbergischen Gelehrten beyderley Geschlechtes nach ihrem Leben*, 4 vols. (Nuremberg, 1755–1758), 2: 394–405; 396–7.

62 Lange considered divorce a violation of natural law and argued this case against the Halle jurist J.H. Böhmer in his undated *Gründlicher Beweis daß die Divortia oder Ehescheidungen Jure Naturae verboten seyn, und nur erst nach dem Sünden-Fall im kläglichen Statu Legali ihren Platz bekommen haben, Fürnehmlich entgegen gesetzt denen Haupt-Hypothesibus einer zu Halle unter dem Praesidio des hochberühmten Jcti Halensis, Tit. Herrn J.H. Böhmeri gehalten inaugural Dissertation de Jure Principis evangelici circa divortiam. Daß ist: Vom Recht Evangelischer Fürsten in Ehescheidungs-Sachen* (Berlin, c. 1715). This learned feud was followed up by Lange in 1717 with *Göttlich-triumphirende Wahrheit seines gründlichen Beweises, Daß die Divortia oder Ehescheidungen Jure Naturae verboten seyn*, directed this time against J.F. Käyser's response to his earlier treatise.

63 *Dissertatio historico-philologico-theologica de Alcorani prima inter Europeos editione Arabica, ante sesquiseculum & quod excurrit, in Italia per Paganinum Brixiansem facta, sed jussu Pontificis Romani penitus abolita* (Altdorf, 1703).

64 *Dissertatio historico-philologico-theologica de speciminibus, conatibus variis atque novissimis successibus doctorum quorundam virorum in edendo Alcorano Arabico* (Altdorf, 1704).

of the Qur'an, both Oriental and Occidental, Printed as well as hitherto Unpublished.<sup>65</sup> Among other things, these records of early eighteenth-century literary history are instructive for what they tell us about the inherent link between attempts at composing histories of a given scholarly field and the confessional identity of the authors.

As we have seen, by the time Lange composed his three dissertations in 1703/4, the Qur'an had become the object of an intense scholarly effort. Since Grapius's *Historia literaria Alcorani* of 1701, there had appeared Acoluthus's ambitious polyglot specimen (1701) and David Nerreter's 1703 German rendering of Marracci's Latin translation. Together with previous accomplishments in the field, these offered Lange a sufficient corpus for a more extensive literary history than Grapius' recent work.

After some preliminary remarks, the first of Lange's three literary histories, *An Historical-Philological-Theological Dissertation concerning the First Arabic Edition of the Qur'an among Europeans*, opens with a claim which would have surprised many of his readers:

... I began to examine the fate of the first Arabic edition of the Qur'an [to be produced] by Europeans, which was indeed older than all the other printed samples of Qur'an translations. A few years ago only a handful were acquainted with this edition, if only fleetingly, and today but a few know of its history. So anxious was the Roman Curia to burn all copies of that Arabic edition that hardly any record of the affair can be reconstructed from the literary documents of the day.<sup>66</sup>

In other words, Lange concedes that the Hamburg Orientalist Abraham Hinckelmann, who like Lange had Pietist sympathies and who had published the entire Arabic text of the Qur'an in 1694, was not the first to do so. As Lange points out, the first printed edition of the Qur'an appeared in Venice from the printing press of Paganino de' Paganini in 1530 (the actual date is sometime

65 *Dissertatio historico-philologico-theologica de Alcorani versionibus variis tam Orientalibus, quam Occidentalibus, impressis et hactenus ANEKΔOTOIΣ* (Aldorf, 1704).

66 Lange, *De Alcorani prima editione*, p. 5: '... disserere incipiam de Fatis primae inter Europaeos Editionis Arabicae Alcorani, quae profecto antiquior erat omnibus omnium Versionum Alcorani exemplis impressis. Pauci ante paucos annos hanc editionem primam vel obiter sciverunt; historiam autem hodiernum paucissimi plene tenent. Adeo enim sollicita erat curia Romana in [p. 6] omnibus illius editionis Arabicae exemplis abolendis, ut vix memoria rei ex istorum temporum documentis literariis restitui queat.'

between the summers of 1537 and 1538).<sup>67</sup> In all likelihood neither Lange nor any of his contemporaries had ever seen this edition, the only known exemplar of which was discovered in Venice in 1987.<sup>68</sup> Carefully following a string of circumstantial evidence going back to Guillaume Postel and other indirect sixteenth-century attestations, and through a series of innuendos circulating in learned footnotes since the early seventeenth century, Lange explains the reason why this pioneering feat of Oriental scholarship had disappeared off the face of the earth: Catholic obscurantism. All copies of Paganini's printed Qur'an were supposedly consigned to the flames by order of Pope Paul III.<sup>69</sup> The supposed papal decree is, however, no more than a learned myth. There was an entirely different reason for the disappearance of Paganini's Arabic Qur'an, as recent scholarship has shown. An Arabic Qur'an printed in the first half of the sixteenth century could not have been intended for even a limited European readership, which barely existed, for Arabic, at the time, but was almost certainly meant for export to the Ottoman Empire. Paganini's Qur'an was probably destroyed on arrival at the Ottoman Empire due to early modern Muslim misgivings about the printing of the Qur'an—misgivings which the faultiness of Paganini's Qur'an would have confirmed.<sup>70</sup>

This pontifical enmity to Oriental studies in the sixteenth century is posited by Lange within the context of the Reformation: 'All was in tumult in those days as a result of the ferment brought about by the Reformation, so that the adherents of the Roman Church feared lest certain people should misuse their liberty to propagate and preach the Mohammedan religion.'<sup>71</sup> Lange considers the arguments in favour of this supposed act of combustive censorship: the anti-Christian arguments in the Qur'an;<sup>72</sup> the need to protect the faithful; the fact that Turks would not have treated Christian writing any kinder; and even the argument put forward by some opposed to the study of the

67 On Paganino de' Paganini and his son Alessandro see F.J. Norton, *Italian Printers 1501–1520: An Annotated List, with an Introduction* (London, 1958), pp. 116–17, 145 and 342, and F. Ascarelli and M. Menato, *La tipografia del '500 in Italia* (Florence, 1989), pp. 342–3.

68 A. Nuovo, 'Il Corano arabo ritrovato', *La Bibliofilia*, 89(3) (1987), 237–71.

69 Lange, *De Alcorani prima editione*, pp. 5–6.

70 H. Bobzin, *Ließ ein Papst den Koran verbrennen? Mutmaßungen zum Venezianer Korandruck von 1537/38* (Munich, 2014); id., 'Von Venedig nach Kairo: zur Geschichte arabischer Korandrucke (16. bis frühes 20. Jahrhundert)', in *Sprachen des Nahen Ostens und die Druckrevolution*, ed. E. Hanebutt-Benz et al. (Westhofen, 2002), pp. 151–76; 152–5.

71 Lange, *De Alcorani prima editione*, p. 18: 'Omnia tunc temporis in motu erant ex Reformationis aestu, ita ut Ecclesiae Romanae addicti metuerent sibi, ne libertate quidam abuterentur, vel ad Religionis Mohammedicae propagationem & praedicationem. Justus ne autem? an injustus fuerit ille motus? alia est quaestio.'

72 On which Lange had himself written in *De fabulis mohhamaedicis*.



Qur'an that the collective failure to produce a new Christian translation of the entire Qur'an since Bibliander was a divine omen.<sup>73</sup> Similar arguments had been adduced earlier by Grapius to explain the failure by numerous scholars to produce the Arabic text of the Qur'an. They are all rejected by Lange. The manner in which he investigates his detective story is in itself interesting and, even more so, the way he turns the tables on Catholic scholarship, which, for all its pioneering merits, allegedly fell victim to papal obscurantism. At the same time, this could have been intended as a subtle argument against many of Lange's Lutheran contemporaries, who were as opposed as any imaginary Qur'an burning pope to the book's publication in Arabic or in any other language.<sup>74</sup>

Lange's following dissertations in the series are devoted to a history of (extant) editions of the Qur'an in Arabic and in translation. They are both a study in literary history as well as a carefully argued defence of Christian scholars' study of the Qur'an. His third dissertation chronicles the history of Qur'an translations up to his own day in Oriental and Occidental languages and, in doing so, documents and celebrates this branch of scholarship (especially among his fellow European scholars), while ending with a brief 'polemical chapter on the trustworthiness and authority of translators, when a conversion of hearts is intended'.<sup>75</sup> Relying on translations of the Qur'an in attempting to convert Muslims simply will not do. No translation, however good, is ever a perfect rendition of the original:

Innumerable instances concerning translations of Holy Scripture itself stand out, and pontifical theologians are rightly castigated by Protestant theologians when they excessively exalt their Latin Vulgate in traditional fashion and greatly prefer it in their Church to the sources (*fontes*) themselves. The same applies to a great many Qur'anic texts where translators have followed divergent and occasionally even contradictory paths. What prudent man would dare attempt to change a sensible man's mind unless he has learned how to procure his argument from the source and from the original text itself?<sup>76</sup>

73 Ibid., pp. 18–19.

74 Lange was not alone in assuming that Paganini's Qur'an was destroyed by the pope. As late as 1958, almost three decades before the only hitherto known copy was discovered, Norton, *Italian Printers 1501–1520*, p. 117, noted cautiously: 'No bibliographer of any period has seen this work and it has been supposed that it was suppressed by papal authority.'

75 Lange, *De Alcorani versionibus*, pp. 33§: 'Caput secundum idque polemicum de fide et auctoritate interpretum, quando conscientiarum convictio intenditur.'

76 Ibid., p. 35: 'Exempla talia innumera in versionibus ipsorum Bibliorum hinc inde prostant,

That Lange, to the best of my knowledge, had no concrete interest in converting Muslims (arguably an unlikely task in Altdorf in 1704) is beside the point. More significant is his positing of Oriental studies within the humanist and Protestant insistence on the return *ad fontes*. Starting his series of dissertations on European Qur'an scholarship with Paganini's doomed edition, has, I would argue, a subtle point, which is made clear by the opening statement of his second dissertation:

With the rise of the purified evangelical teaching in the sixteenth century, the study of Oriental languages began to flourish, and after Hebrew, Chaldean and Syriac came Arabic, to the not inconsiderable benefit of students of theology, though not with the same success enjoyed by other Oriental languages, since the first [scholars] in Europe (*his terris*) to be captivated by the love of that language had but little assistance.<sup>77</sup>

A survey of Qur'an translations could have begun with Robert of Ketton or, as Lange does not seem to have been all that interested in this early translation, with the flourishing of Oriental scholarship in the seventeenth century. Beginning his survey with Paganini's edition, which he dates to 1530, coinciding with the formulation of the Lutheran Augsburg Confession, allows him to consider this strand of scholarship as related to the emergence of Protestantism. The supposed nexus between the Reformation and Oriental scholarship is stressed in Lange's dating of Bibliander and Oporinus's printing of Ketton's translation in 1543 as 'three years before Luther's death'.<sup>78</sup> True enough, as Lange concedes, many of the advances in Oriental studies, in general, and in editing and translating the Qur'an, in particular, were achieved by Catholics; but they, as his

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atque a Protestantibus Theologis rectissime Pontificiis objiciuntur, quando hi suam Vulgatam Latinam more antiquo excessive extollunt, atque in sua Ecclesia tantum non ipsis fontibus praeferunt. Idem obtinet in plurimis Alcorani textibus, ubi interpretes ipsi haud raro in partes, aliquando etiam contradictorias abeunt. Quis jam cordatus audeat conscientiam hominis sanioris convincere, nisi rem didicerit conficere ex fonte & ipso textu originali?

77 Lange, *De speciminibus*, p. 3: 'Ex quo literae Orientales una cum puriore Evangelii doctrina, seculo praecipue decimo sexto efflorescere inceperunt, post Ebraicam, Chaldaicam & Syriacam, mox quoque Arabica lingua, non sine felici studiorum Theologicorum omine, spiritum trahere deprehensa est, quanquam non eo statim qui reliquis obtigerat, successu. Magis quippe adminicula, atque in prioribus deerant iis, quos linguae Arabicae in his terris ceperat amor.'

78 Lange, *De Alcorani versionibus*, p. 10: '... donec eandem [Roberti Retinensis versionem latinam] THEODORVS BIBLIANDER, post inventam artem Typographicam, triennio ante B. Lutheri obitum, hoc est, anno 1543. Primus praelo subjiceret.'

stress on 'Catholic obscurantism' implies, were participating, whether they realized it or not, in a late humanist Protestant endeavour, centred on a return *ad fontes*.

Lange's account of Qur'an editions and translations into European languages offers a detailed survey of this branch of scholarship. Tendentious as it blatantly is, it is an overlooked treasure trove for modern scholars seeking to learn about early modern Oriental studies. But if we are to gauge Lange's intentions, rather than his usefulness for modern scholarship, a further point is crucial. As mentioned above, this series of dissertations came only five years after the appearance of Marracci's landmark Qur'an edition (1698). If Paganini's Qur'an could be (wrongly) portrayed as a victim of a papacy inimical to Oriental studies, this argument could in no way be applied to Marracci, a priest and papal confessor, whose Qur'an was printed in Padua with the Catholic Church's approval.

It is here that we find Lange in his most uncharitable mode. To dismiss Marracci openly was not a plausible option, and so his dissertations are a subtle attempt at side-lining him. Marracci's work is drowned amid a detailed account of editions and translations of even minute portions of the Qur'an. In the dissertation of April 1704, dealing with Arabic editions of the Qur'an and spanning thirty-three pages, Marracci is allotted one and a half pages, half of which are taken up by repeating Andreas Acoluthus's critique.<sup>79</sup> Lange's own verdict is summed up in a backhanded compliment: 'Laudata est Marraccii industria, etsi non ubique rem tetigerit acu' ('Marracci's diligence has been praised, even if he did not always hit the mark').<sup>80</sup> Acoluthus's own slim polyglot Qur'an, which contained only the text of the brief opening sura, is accorded more attention than Marracci's comprehensive edition and Latin translation of the entire Qur'an.

As Oriental studies in Lutheran universities were mostly construed by practitioners in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries within the framework of *philologia sacra*, they required, by necessity, an acceptable genealogy. Acknowledging minor achievements by Catholic scholars, as Lange repeatedly does, was fine; but Marracci posed an embarrassment. This is perhaps not so much due to Lutheran concerns that the task of converting the Muslims (by studying and refuting their writings) should be entrusted to a Protestant—a pious claim seldom backed by actual interest in converting Muslims. Lange himself conceded in the introduction to the first dissertation of 1703 that the

79 Lange, *De speciminibus*, pp. 30–32.

80 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

conversion of Muslims was an idle hope.<sup>81</sup> It is arguably the quest for a confessionally acceptable pedigree of this branch of learning which inspired what now seems like a disingenuous marginalization of Marracci. There is, however, more to Lange and these learned dissertations than confessional narrow-mindedness.

To understand these dissertations within their contemporary and biographical context, we need to take a step back to a work of Lange's from ten years earlier. In 1694, while he was still serving as a pastor in the Upper Palatine, he published a theological compendium in German, *Kern des wahren Christenthums* (The Core of True Christianity).<sup>82</sup> In the introduction he laid out an intellectual-theological agenda which he had in mind, but was temporarily unable to pursue due to his pastoral duties. The young theologian had no less a design than to tackle Judaism and Islam (*alle Haupt-Religionen*), as well as natural theology and atheism. He planned to offer an outline of the European (Christian) achievements in editing and translating the Qur'an:

Following this introduction, I intended to publish a specimen of my knowledge about the teaching of the Qur'an, which would be realized in three anti-Mohammedan exercises (*Exercitationes AntiMohhamoedanae*), which are almost complete in *De figmentis Alcorani circa mysterium Trinitatis*. [Finally], it was my intention to assemble from the Qur'an itself a systematic compendium of the Mohammedan teaching and religion.<sup>83</sup>

81 Lange, *De Alcorani prima editione*, p. 4.

82 Johann Michael Lange, *Kern des wahren Christenthums / Der Einfalt / und absonderlich Er wachsenen / jedoch aber im Christenthum verabsäumten Leuten / zum besten / nach Nothdurfft verfasst / und In Schrift-reicher Ineinanderfügung der Grund- und Haupt- Articuln Christlicher Lehre / als in dem Ersten Haupt-Kerns* (Nuremberg, 1694).

83 Ibid., sigs. 2v–3v: 'Demnach ware me[i]n Vorhaben / erstlich in unterschiedlichen Schrifften zu zeigen / mit was vor einem Apparatu ich das Werck angegriffen / und wie weit ich in Untersuchung aller Haupt-Religionen / wie auch der Theologiae Naturalis, und der Religion-losen Atheisten / so wol was ihre Theoretica, als Practica Principia belanget / gestiegen seye. Ein Praeludium sollte gleichsam seyn die nun meist zum Stand gebrachte Diatribe Critica de Alcorani Codicibus Manuscriptis & Editionibus Arabicis, totalibus & partialibus, ut & de Versionibus ejusdem Persica, Indica, Latina multiplici, Italica, Germanica, Belgica, Arragonica, Gallica & c. da ich durch fünff sonderbare Capita, viel denckwürdige / und theils ins gemein nicht beobachtete / theils fälschlich geglaubte Dinge bemerkte: welche wie sie leicht zu verstehen / und groß in die Augen der Polyhistorum fallen / also auch am alledienstlichsten sind / eine Explication in der Welt von jemand zu erwecken. Nächst diesem Praeludio, wollte ich ein Specimen meiner Erkenntnis [sic] von des Alcorans LehrSätzen heraus geben / welches in dreyen Exercitationibus AntiMohhamoedanis geschen sollte / die auch schon meistens vollkommen beyeinander sind de Figmentis Alcorani circa mysterium Trinitatis. Drittens hatte ich mit fürgenommen / aus dem Alcoran selbsten ein methodisches Compendium der Mohhamoedanischen

The three *historia literaria* dissertations appeared within the context of several other polemical writings: the anti-Jewish polemics concerning Jesus's genealogy (1696) and the anti-Muslim polemic concerning the Trinity (1697), already advertised in *Kern des wahren Christenthums*. And so, the three dissertations of 1703/4 are a faithful execution of the agenda set out in 1694. That a new, and for Lange fateful, theological storm was gathering at the very same time, following his endorsement of the Pietists Rosenbach and Petersen, was a grim irony, the consequences of which he would fathom only later.

The immediate context of Lange's three Qur'an dissertations, in my view, is that of learned polemics. Having established his agenda as early as 1694, he stepped into the academic arena a well-trained gladiator ready for combat—and eager for it. Though polemics, it should be stressed, do not exhaust his scholarly output, they do represent the context for the greater part of it: whether refuting paganism, Judaism, Islam or 'atheism', his losing battle as a Pietist in Altdorf, or his learned feud over the right of Protestant princes to divorce in his later years of exile in Prenzlau. That Lange, as far as I am aware, never displayed any real interest in converting Muslims to Christianity is of less concern for our purposes. What is important is the basic confrontational mode of his scholarship—in this he was not indulging in anything unusual for his times. The need to know the Qur'an and its literary history for its refutation led him, almost by necessity, to a secondary confrontation. Understanding the Qur'an (and hence Islam)<sup>84</sup> entailed an acquaintance with the history of scholarship in this field. Since Oriental scholarship was for Lange part of the humanist and Protestant return *ad fontes*, the significant Catholic achievements in the field could not pass without comment, and so Paganino de' Paganini's vanished Qur'an was the victim of papal obscurantism (a not uncommon explanation until 1987) and Marracci had to be side-lined. To a modern reader this may seem unkind or even narrow minded. It is not my intention to 'salvage' the reputation of Grapius or Lange, who have since faded into obscurity, but instead to point out that, for deeply religious scholars around 1700 acutely aware of the need to root their interests and scholarly attainments in a respectable genealogy, religious and confessional impartiality were seldom a viable option.

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Lehre und Religion zu sammeln; und wie dessen schon an vielen Excerptis ex Corano ich einen hinlänglichen Apparatum hatte / also gedachte ich auch damit denen / welche in solchem Stuck noch nicht bewandert sind / zu dienen.'

84 For the lateness of early modern study of other Muslim texts, e.g., commentaries (in comparison to the long-established awareness of the significance of rabbinical writings for understanding Judaism) see N. Malcolm, 'The Study of Islam in Early Modern Europe', in *Antiquarianism and Intellectual Life in Europe and China, 1500-1800*, ed. P. Miller and F. Louis (Ann Arbor, 2012), pp. 265–88.

Lange's dissertations of 1703/4 and numerous similar works of his day show how the genre of *historia literaria* was, in many cases, informed by confessional concerns. It also highlights the deep-seated ambivalence of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century scholars, who were committed to the Republic of Letters and to the collaborative advancement of learning, while at the same time aware of the need to establish their scholarly endeavours within a confessional framework. Several branches of learning, the real and rapid advancement of which was witnessed by late seventeenth-century scholars, still found their *raison d'être* in an essentially confessional context. Even for a Lutheran like Lange, whose distance from Lutheran orthodoxy was revealed by the Rosenbach affair, these confessional concerns were part and parcel of his quest for truth, the advancement of learning and scholarly *Schadenfreude*.

## Fasting: The Limits of Catholic Confessionalization in Eastern Christianity in the Eighteenth Century

*Bernard Heyberger*

It was during the eighteenth century that norms were systematically introduced into the Eastern Catholic Churches, under pressure from Rome and through pontifical decrees and local synods which set out the rules on various issues such as the relations between patriarch and bishops, the regulation of monastic life, the sacraments, fasting and abstinence.

This tendency to increase uniformity within a denomination and to establish clear borders between different Christian denominations or between Christians and Muslims, by reinforcing the ecclesiastical hierarchy and establishing strict rules through synods and the publication of canonical texts, was not exclusive to Catholics. The Orthodox Church, in reaction to the Roman Catholic Church and using similar instruments, also tried to standardize practices and to control the faithful, although with a less powerful organization and a less efficient agency.<sup>1</sup> This development had to do with confessionalization insofar as it reinforced borders between religious communities, along with signs of identification and differentiation, whereas previously ambiguity and confusion had often prevailed.<sup>2</sup>

The ecclesiastical authorities, however, were never able to achieve their aim completely: firstly, because there was a range of denominations and practices among Christians, which became more prominent during the eighteenth century through migrations and mixed settlements; secondly, because ecclesiastical institutions remained weak and dependent on secular ones; and, thirdly, because it was impossible to rely on political powers to enforce pontifical,

1 See, e.g., the production of Greek handbooks for confession, which were almost completely copied from Latin templates: V. Tsakiris, *Die gedruckten griechischen Beichtbücher zur Zeit der Türkenherrschaft. Ihr kirchenpolitischer Entstehungszusammenhang und ihre Quellen* (Berlin and New York, 2009). See also B. Heyberger, 'Morale et confession chez les melkites d'Alep d'après une liste de péchés (fin xvii<sup>e</sup> siècle)', in *L'Orient chrétien dans l'empire musulman, Hommage au professeur Gérard Troupeau*, ed. G. Gobillot and M. Urvoy (Paris, 2005), pp. 283–306.

2 W. Reinhard, 'Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?', in *Die katholische Konfessionalisierung*, ed. W. Reinhard and H. Schilling (Gütersloh, 1995), pp. 419–52 (n° 198).

patriarchal or synodal decisions. Moreover, the widespread humanist and post-Reformation idea that standardization could be achieved through the historical investigation of sources, allowing for a return to the genuine traditions which had been corrupted through manuscript transmission, became an unattainable goal, since, with the progress of knowledge, the unity and uniformity of the traditional rules were contested by scholarship. I shall now demonstrate this dilemma with regard to fasting and abstinence.

## 1 Diversity of Rules and Practices

Fasting and abstinence, as well as sacraments, concern not only the clergy but the whole flock. Fasting and abstinence are individual disciplines which everyone has to impose on his or her own body; but they are also collective ones, since food is prepared in the home, shared by all the residents living under the same roof and consumed within a specific timetable defined by the Church. Thus, it was a criterion for distinguishing Catholic behaviour from that of other believers, in a context of religious pluralism. When the surrounding society was politically and culturally dominated by Muslims, Christians often shared norms and values with the majority of the population in a rather informal way. The liturgical calendar of each Christian church, with its rules of fasting, was a tool for distinguishing Christians from Muslims and from other Christian denominations. On the contrary, in the case of Christians compelled to convert externally to Islam, keeping the Christian rules for fasting in secret could be proof of their fidelity to their previous faith.<sup>3</sup>

The rules of fasting and abstinence, however, could only draw lines of distinction between believers belonging to different churches if they were strict, precise and consistently implemented throughout the entire flock.

And this was not the case until the seventeenth century. In his famous account of his travels from Damascus to Moscow with his father, Makarius al-Za'īm, the Greek Patriarch of Antioch, the deacon Būlus describes the practice of Lent in Moldavia and in Moscow. The presence of a Christian political authority, as well as specific local alimentary customs, had produced a quite different tradition of fasting from what was in use in the Greek Church of Syria. Even within the same geographical area and the same denomination, there

3 See the case of the 'white' Maronites, externally converted to Islam, in Thomas a Jesu, *De unione schismaticorum cum Ecclesia catholica procuranda*, in *Theologiae cursus completus*, ed. J.P. Migne, 28 vols. (Paris, 1840–45), 5: 397–710; 688–9. I thank Aurélien Girard for this reference.



was no uniformity. Travelling in 1707 from Aleppo to Zūk Mikhā'il on Mount Lebanon, the young Maronite Hannā Diyāb, ignoring local rules, began to eat during Lent before the native Maronites broke their fast, which led to some trouble.<sup>4</sup>

From the beginning, in order to distinguish Christians from Jews and to integrate non-Jews coming from different backgrounds into Christian communities, the classification of food as 'licit' and 'pure' or 'illicit' and 'impure' was rejected by the Apostles, who maintained that the faithful, in theory, had the liberty (or responsibility) to determine their own dietary rules. Nevertheless, this apparent liberty came into conflict with the anthropological and medical belief that there was a specific value to each kind of food, which called for a regulated diet.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, the Christian rules of fasting and abstinence, generally elaborated in the context of asceticism and monasticism, are very complex and, from the start, have varied not only from one denomination to another, but, as in these instances, even within the same denomination from one place to another.<sup>6</sup> In the Greek Orthodox Church, for instance, there is no normative text on the issue, because the Greek Fathers considered that a strict position would constitute a return to Judaism, a kind of Judaizing. Rules appeared in the handbooks on rituals known as *Typika*, but there was no uniformity among them.<sup>7</sup> In a file conserved in the historical archives of the Congregation *De Propaganda Fide*, dated 1781, the Roman advisor Giorgi Cagno tries to summarize the issue of fasting among the Greeks and the Eastern Christians. After examining previous scholarly research on this matter,<sup>8</sup> he mentions the famous controversy between Gregory the Protosyncellus<sup>9</sup> and Mark of Ephesus over the Union of the Eastern and Western churches

4 H. Dyāb, *D'Alep à Paris. Les pérégrinations d'un jeune Syrien au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris, 2015), pp. 75–7.

5 M. Montanari, *La chère et l'esprit. Histoire de la culture alimentaire chrétienne* (Paris, 2017), pp. 11–29, 59–94 (French translation of *Mangiare da cristiani. Diete, digiuni, banchetti. Storie di una cultura* [Milan, 2015]).

6 Joseph de l'Isle, *Histoire dogmatique et morale du jeûne* (Paris, 1741), introduction.

7 J. Getcha, *Le Typikon décrypté. Manuel de liturgie byzantine* (Paris, 2009), pp. 157–260; A. Metalas et al., 'Fasting and Food Habits in the Eastern Orthodox Church', in *Food and Faith in Christian Culture*, ed. K. Albala and T. Eden (New York, 2011), pp. 189–204.

8 Archivio Storico, Sacra Congregatio 'De Propaganda Fide' (ASCPF), CP Melchiti, 137, 1764–1781, fols. 530r–705v, *Congregatio particularis super dejuniis Graecorum aliorumque Orientalium habita die 16 Iulii 1781*, fols. 542r–627v: *Voto del P. Giorgi Cagno*.

9 Gregory the Protosyncellus is the author of an *Apology of the Council of Florence*. He is identified with Gregorios Melissenos, also called Mammas, patriarch of Constantinople (1443) and apostle of the Union of the Greek and Latin churches, who died in Rome (1459). See R. Janin, 'Grégoire Melissenos', *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* (Paris, 1912–), vol. 22, fasc. 126, col. 3.

negotiated in 1439 at the Council of Florence, in which the variety of customs and of fasting practices in Constantinople was used by Gregory to claim that differences in rituals could not be used as an argument against the union of the two churches. According to Gregory, at that time in the Byzantine capital, some people began fasting before Christmas on 15 November, others on 6 December and still others on 20 December. And during Lent, many ate fish on Saturdays and Sundays, whereas others ate it on other days of the week, while a third group abstained completely. There were also numerous variations and discussions about xerophagy (eating food cooked without oil) and abstinence from animal products (meat, eggs and dairy). Cagno also cites Leo Allatius,<sup>10</sup> who states that, during Lent, the Greek clergy sometimes permit oil and wine for laymen and that fish is prohibited even on the Saturdays and Sundays of Lent, whereas Jacques Goar maintains that xerophagy has been reduced and that 'the most imperfect and vile fish' like oysters, crabs, cuttlefishes or dried fish roe, as well as wine and oil, are allowed on Saturdays and Sundays during Lent.<sup>11</sup> Cagno concludes that the custom regarding shellfish is *antichissimo*.<sup>12</sup> The confusion about what was and was not allowed was greater concerning the three other fasting times of the year (Advent, before Christmas; Apostles' fasting, before Sts Peter and Paul's Feast, June 29; Holy Virgin's fast, before Assumption, 15 August), so that it was impossible for him to present a clear idea of the rules and practices concerning them.<sup>13</sup>

In theology and dogma, the rules of fasting and abstinence are matters of indifference. Nevertheless, they can be used, and have been used historically, to distinguish Christians of one denomination from those of another or from non-Christians, in the context of coexistence and rivalry between them. Especially during the seventeenth century, the topic provoked considerable

10 Cagno cites Leo Allatius's 'dissertatio' and his introduction to the *Triodion*. See L. Petit, 'Allatius, Léon', *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, 30 vols. (Paris, 1907), 1: cols. 1220–26. On both issues, see Leo Allatius, *De libris ecclesiasticis Graecorum, dissertationes duae divinatorum officiorum potiores et usitatores libri percensentur: altera, triodidum; pentecostarum, et paracletice examinantur* (Paris, 1645); second edition (Paris, 1646), under the title *De libris ecclesiasticis Graecorum, dissertationes et observationes variae*.

11 Jacques Goar, *Euchologion sive Rituale graecorum complectens ritus et ordines divinae liturgiae, officiorum, sacramentorum* (Paris, 1647), p. 949.

12 ASCPF, CP Melchiti, 137, fol. 564r. A Carmelite missionary, Giovanni Tommaso Della Croce, who settled in Tripoli, but visited the Christians of the Bekaa plain around Baalbeck, states that the prohibition of fish with bones was common in the Orient, while fish without bones and shellfish were permitted—these, however, were very expensive, so that the poor were constrained to very strict fasting, while the wealthy were exempt, which was a source of conflict. See ASCPF, CP Melchiti, 76, fols. 332r–335v, 1727.

13 ASCPF, CP Melchiti, 137, fols. 569r–580v

controversy in the West between Protestants and Catholics, so much so that Catholics felt compelled to be even more precise about the rules regulating the consumption of food.<sup>14</sup>

Cagno quotes from a Greek printed *Typikon* which, mentioning Theodore Studite, argues that, 'we have to eat cheese, butter and eggs during the "week of dairy"', which, among the Greeks, precedes Lent, in order to oppose the dogma of the Armenian 'heresy' and their 'appalling fasting'.<sup>15</sup> A theological treatise of the eleventh century, entitled *Kitāb al-hudā*, which from the seventeenth century Maronites regarded as their 'Nomocanon', devotes long passages to distinguishing 'Orthodox' practice from that of the deviant Melkite and Armenian churches, concerning the duration of daily fasting and the list of forbidden foods.<sup>16</sup> That Maronites share with Jacobites the custom of eating meat on the Wednesdays and Fridays between Easter and Pentecost can also be seen as proof of a common Syriac origin of these two denominations.<sup>17</sup>

In the Eastern tradition, fasting belongs to a cosmological and communal conception of religion. Regulation of the annual cycle of time is one of the prerogatives of the clergy and contributes to a spiritual conception of the world which is specific to Christianity. Fasting is an individual discipline over the body; but each individual fasts under the control of the collectivity and contributes to its common salvation. From the beginning, fasting has been associated with feasting: it is a time of collective penitence, before the joy of Easter and of other feasts. Abstinence is associated with communion. Alimentary asceticism is conceived as a collective preparation for eucharistic devotion, following an annual schedule related to the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>18</sup> A special liturgy (among the Greeks called the Presanctified Mass) is associated with Lent.

14 Montanari, *La chère et l'esprit*, pp. 109, 125–6, 135–7; Albala, 'Historical Background'. S.H. De Franceschi, *Morales du Carême. Essai sur les doctrines du jeûne et de l'abstinence dans le catholicisme latin XVIIe-XIXe siècle* (Paris, 2018), pp. 72–109 : the competition was also within Catholicism, between 'relaxed' Casuists and 'rigorist' Jansenists.

15 ASCPF, CP Melchiti 137, fols. 548v–549v. On this point, see Getcha, *Le Typikon décrypté*, pp. 158–60.

16 B. Heyberger, 'Les transformations du jeûne chez les chrétiens orientaux', in *Le corps et le sacré en Orient musulman*, ed. C. Mayeur-Jaouen and B. Heyberger, special issue, *Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, 113–14 (2006), 267–85. *Kitāb al-Hudā*, ed. B. Fahd (Fahed) (Aleppo, 1935), p. 416; see the French translation 'Kitāb al-Hudā ou Livre de la Direction', in *Pentalogie antiochienne / Domaine maronite*, ed. Y. Moubarac, 5 vols. (Beirut, 1984), 1: 287–91.

17 ASCPF, CP Maroniti, 135, fol. 371v. See the rule in *Le Synode Libanais de 1736*, ed. E. Atallah, 2 vols. (Paris, 2001), 2: 29–30.

18 Heyberger, 'Les transformations du jeûne'.

In the West, the annual organization of time, as well as the rules of fasting and abstinence, differed from that of the Eastern churches almost from the beginning. Moreover, this ancient spiritual and cosmological sense of fasting and abstinence was progressively lost during the Middle Ages, and the rules became less stringent. The insistence on confession and eucharist, conceived as an individual practice, not a collective one, depreciated the value of fasting. Louis Thomassin, who in 1680 wrote the reference book on fasts, intended to restore the value of this practice. He invited his readers to consider the Eastern churches, which insist on abstention from meat during Lent, even for those suffering from the most extreme mortal disease, and the Greek monks, who maintain the same rigour throughout their life, rather than the ancient Latin hermits. But he also invited his readers to observe the most important fasts of all in his eyes: the mortification of the passions, the repression of covetousness and the correction of vice, understanding fasting in an abstract and metaphorical way which drew on the Eastern comprehension of the practice.<sup>19</sup>

When Western missionaries came to the Orient in the seventeenth century, they learned about the length and strictness of fasting among Eastern Christians, to which they reacted with both admiration and disapproval.<sup>20</sup> The Carmelite Elia Giacinto di Santa Maria, after introducing himself as a heroic missionary going from village to village 'as did Christ', carrying on his back the vestments of office and the altar wine, sleeping rough and eating sour milk, evoked the severity of fasting as practised by the Maronites of the mountains above Tripoli, who during the four fasts and the weekly stations of Wednesday and Friday ate only wild greens, polenta, grape paste, lentils and olives. Rice was scarce, and fish was completely absent from their diet, he wrote. During Lent, they practised 'natural fasting', which meant that they did not swallow even a drop of water and did not take tobacco until 3PM, apart from Saturdays, Sundays and several feast days. During the three other fasts, they settled for abstinence.<sup>21</sup>

19 Louis Thomassin, *Traitez historiques et dogmatiques sur divers points, de la discipline de l'Eglise et de la morale chrétienne*. 2 vols. (Paris, 1680), 1: 542–3; the same argument appears in the pastoral letters of rigorist bishops: De Franceschi, *Morales du Carême*, pp. 72–85. Montanari, *La chère et l'esprit*, pp. 137–43; Albala, 'Historical Background to Food and Christianity'; S. Watts, 'Religious Conviction, Scientific Inquiry, and Medical Knowledge in Early Modern France', in *Food and Faith in Christian Culture*, ed. K. Albala and T. Eden (New York, 2011), chapter 5.

20 Heyberger, 'Les transformations du jeûne'; Richard Simon, *Histoire critique de la Créance et des Coûtumes des Nations du Levant* (Frankfurt, 1684), pp. 32–3.

21 ASCPF, Rome, série SOCG, vol. 551, 1705, fols. 130r–136r. I. da Seggiano, 'Documenti inediti sull'apostolato dei minori cappuccini nel Vicino Oriente', *Collectanea Franciscana*, 18 (1948), 240–44.

On the other hand, it was common among European travellers to criticize Eastern Christians for paying too much attention to the scrupulous respect for fasting and for regarding it as the most important practice in their religion.<sup>22</sup> In the Catholic Church, the lengthy and strict fasting of Eastern Christians was often considered, especially during the seventeenth century, as an 'abuse' which needed to be corrected.<sup>23</sup> The Capuchins of Aleppo several times contrasted the severity of Oriental Christians in observing fasts against their more offhand approach to the sacraments. One of them, Sylvestre de Saint-Aignan, even claimed that Eastern Christians were the victims of the devil because they were convinced by him to die from starvation, believing that sanctity and salvation could be achieved through such extreme asceticism, while neglecting confession and communion. Missing the Sunday Office, taking communion without confession, dying without receiving the last sacraments—all that was nothing to them. But consuming meat or butter broth during Lent or eating eggs was equivalent to leaving the faith, the Capuchin asserted.<sup>24</sup>

For Eastern Christians, the Catholic attitude towards fasting was ambiguous. On the one hand, the Roman Church valorized the Eastern practice of fasting as belonging to the legitimate diversity of Eastern rites. And in the Roman view, severity prevailed over laxness. On the other hand, the representatives of Rome did not understand the strong sense of fasting among Oriental Christians and sought to depreciate it in comparison to other devotional practices, especially the sacraments. In the Acts of the Maronite Lebanese Synod of 1736, which introduced the discipline of the Council of Trent among them, the chapter 'Fasts and Feasts' covered only three pages,<sup>25</sup> whereas sacraments took up an entire section, with 14 chapters, of which three were dedicated exclusively to confession and penitence!<sup>26</sup> In an Arabic manuscript catechism of the eighteenth century, fasting and abstinence took up two pages, whereas preparation for communion required eight and confession eighteen!<sup>27</sup>

22 Simon, *Histoire critique*, p. 143; Heyberger, 'Les transformations du jeûne'.

23 A. Girard, 'Nihil esse innovandum? Maintien des rites orientaux et négociation de l'Union des Églises orientales avec Rome (fin XVI<sup>e</sup>-mi-XVIII<sup>e</sup> s.)', in *Réduire le schisme? Ecclésiologies et politiques de l'union entre Orient et Occident (XIII<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, ed. M. Blanchet and F. Gabriel (Paris, 2013), pp. 337–52; 340.

24 ASCPF, Rome, série SC, Francia, vol. 3, fol. 85v. Heyberger, 'Les transformations du jeûne'.

25 *Le Synode Libanais de 1736*, pp. 29–31.

26 *Ibid.*, part 2: 'Des sacrements', pp. 39–195, chap. iv, 'Du sacrement de pénitence', pp. 57–65; chap. v, 'Des péchés réservés', pp. 67–74; chap. vi, 'Des sanctions ecclésiastiques', pp. 75–83.

27 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Sbath, n° 165, fol. 51v, fol. 52r; fols. 80r–98v.

## 2 Controversies and Problems about Fasting in the Eighteenth Century

Whereas fasting was not a disciplinary issue for the Roman Church with regard to Eastern Christians during the seventeenth century, it became an important source of controversies and problems during the eighteenth. Rome wanted to set up clear standards for the different Eastern Christian denominations belonging to Catholicism. We know, through the work of Cesare Santus, that during the eighteenth century, the Catholic Church aimed to establish a clear boundary between Catholicism and other Christian affiliations by forbidding as far as possible ‘*communicatio in sacris*’ (‘worship in common’).<sup>28</sup> It is worth remembering that at the same moment a discussion was developing ‘anarchically’ in Italy around the exact application of some rules concerning fasting and abstinence, until the regulations of Pope Benedict XIV (1741–1759),<sup>29</sup> who sought to establish clear standards for the different Eastern Christian denominations belonging to Catholicism. There was also a more global context. In eighteenth-century Catholic Europe, the scientific progress of medicine, combined not only with the theological controversy between Jansenists and Jesuits but also with secularist preoccupations, led to debates about fasting.<sup>30</sup>

When Eastern denominations split between Catholicism and Orthodoxy in the eighteenth century, the practice of fasting and abstinence became an indicator of belonging. As a result, fasting became an even more sectarian feature, helping to demarcate members of different congregations from each other. It was, however, difficult to set out clearly the Eastern rules concerning fasting. And the accusation of relaxation in a context of competition between church leaders became more common. Moreover, the introduction of Roman standards concerning fasting and abstinence entailed an even greater proliferation of norms, making it less easy than previously to exert control over the faithful on this issue. So, questions and contestations about fasting often ended up on the desks of the Roman *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, which tried several times to give a coherent answer.

28 C. Santus, ‘La *communicatio in sacris* con gli “scismatici” orientali in età moderna’, *Mélanges de l’École française de Rome-Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines*, 126.2 (2014), 325–40; id., *Trasgressioni necessarie. ‘Communicatio in sacris’, collaborazioni e conflitti tra le comunità cristiane orientali (Levante e Impero ottomano, XVII–XVIII secolo)* (Rome, 2019). See protests against the prohibition of ‘*communicatio in divinis*’ in ASCPF, CP Melchiti, 77, fols. 9r–13r, Arabic 15v–22v, Cairo, 20 February, 1727; CP Melchiti, 76, fols. 429r–431r, Arabic 430r, Aleppo, 15 April, 1725.

29 De Franceschi, *Morales du Carême*, pp. 274–341.

30 Watts, ‘Enlightened Fasting’.

The confraternities which missionaries introduced to Eastern Christianity with considerable success made it compulsory to fast on Saturdays. But in the Eastern tradition, in contrast to the West, Saturday is not a fasting day, and the weekly stations are Wednesday and Friday.<sup>31</sup> So, did members of confraternities follow the Latin rules or were they faithful to those of their own denomination? Most probably they made their own arrangements. In an Arabic rule for the confraternity of the Scapular of the Virgin of Carmel, it is stated that a member who knows how to read can earn indulgences by reciting the Litanies of the Virgin on Saturdays. And those who do not know how to read must abstain from eating meat; but the possibility of exempting members from this abstinence is left up to the priest.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, there is also evidence that the Catholic missionaries tried to attach Eastern Christians to their own parishes through confraternities. Especially in Damascus, where the Catholic Melkites could not have their own church because they were officially considered as belonging to the Greek Orthodox Church, they attended the chapel of the Franciscan friars, who were accused several times of encouraging the Melkites to follow the Latin rules for fasting.<sup>33</sup> In 1801, the Melkite patriarch Agapios wrote, for instance, that the confraternity of St Francis, promoted by the friars in Damascus, was causing difficulties within families, with domestic quarrels arising about the kitchen and the organization of time when the husband did not follow the same rules as his wife or his children.<sup>34</sup> The Melkite synod of

31 In the *Doctrina Christiana* of Cardinal Bellarmine, translated into Arabic and printed in Rome 1613, the two Maronite translators, Sionita and Hesronita, took care to correct the Latin version with regard to fasting: they replaced the Latin abstinence from meat on Friday and Saturday with the traditional Eastern 'stations' of Wednesday and Friday with abstinence from meat and dairy. See A. Girard, *Le christianisme oriental (xvii<sup>e</sup>–xviii<sup>e</sup> siècles). Essor de l'orientalisme catholique en Europe et construction des identités confessionnelles au Proche-Orient*, PhD diss. (École pratique des hautes études, Section des sciences religieuses, Paris, 2011), p. 105.

32 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Sbath 453, *Kitāb thawb sayyidat al-Karmal*, fols. 16r–17r.

33 B. Heyberger, "Pro nunc, nihil respondendum". Recherche d'informations et prise de décision à la Propagande: l'exemple du Levant (xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle), *Actes du Colloque 'Les Frontières de la mission', Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome, Italie et Méditerranée*, 109.2 (1997), 539–554; 552–3. ASCPF, SC, Melchiti, 2, fol. 412r (trad.), fol. 414r (Arabic), 1 February 1731, the Catholics of Damascus. SC Melchiti, 2, fols. 273r–274v (trad.) 275r–276v (Arabic), Cairo, 25 December 1730. See also CP Melchiti 75, *ristretto*, fols. 106v–113v about the Franciscan parish in Damascus (1729).

34 ASCPF, SC Melchiti, 11, fols. 266r–257v (trans.); fols. 277r–279r (Arabic): fols. 281r–280v, Agapios, 12 November 1801; fol. 289r–v, the position of the Superior of the Franciscans in Damascus, 21 July 1800; fols. 274r–275v, a note of the General Commissar of the Franciscans, explaining the rules of the confraternity, Rome, 21 August 1801. CP, Melchiti 75, fols. 546r–556r, *Rapport sur l'Etat actuel ou se trouvent les affaires de la religion en Levant*: 'ils

Qarqafé (1806) finally forbade adherence to the Third Order of St Francis or to any other Latin pious associations.<sup>35</sup>

In all the Eastern denominations, at least in Syria, alleviation of strict fasting was introduced during the eighteenth century, or perhaps before, by the different ecclesiastical authorities. The will of the patriarchs to standardize the practice, in order to assert their authority and exert better control over their community, as well as to compete with the Latins, led them to reduce the strictness of fasting and abstinence. In the Maronite Church, the Synod of Mount Lebanon, 1736, officially established rules which opened the door to a less stringent correction of the Eastern tradition. The Christmas fast is supposed to begin on 5 December, but it was possible to begin it only on 13 December; the fast of the Virgin is supposed to begin on 1 August, but it was possible to begin it only on 7 August; and the Apostle's fast begins on 15 June, but it was possible to begin it only on 25 June. A traditional number of Wednesdays and Saturdays throughout the year are exempted from abstinence; and the newly introduced Catholic feast of St Joseph, falling during Lent, is also a day of exemption. The synod granted to the patriarch the power to impose other days of fasting, or exemption from fasting, but only for a specific and serious necessity.<sup>36</sup> Nothing was said about eating fish, using oil or drinking wine, all of which seem to have been allowed. According to a report of the Franciscan missionary Angelo da Servigliano in 1769, the Maronites were used to following the less stringent options offered by the synod of 1736 concerning the length of fasts. Moreover, the same new rules were apparently adopted by Syrian and Armenian Catholics, as well as by Chaldeans settled in Aleppo. Even worse, the report asserts that among the Armenians there was complete disorder on this matter.<sup>37</sup>

Nevertheless, it was among the Melkites that fasting led to the longest and the most severe conflicts, directly linked to the struggle for power within the patriarchate of Antioch. In 1719, the bishop of Sidon, Aftīmyūs Sayfī, provoked strong resistance from the Greek Orthodox patriarchs, led by Chrysanthos

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[les missionnaires] croient de plus qu'en conservant mesme leur rit il faut mettre quelque difference entre les réunis et les schismatiques, en un mot ils veulent que leur victoire quelque médiocre qu'elle puisse estre soit marquée par quelque trophée'.

35 C. de Clercq, *Conciles des Orientaux catholiques* (Paris, 1949), p. 357.

36 *Le Synode Libanais de 1736*, pp. 29–30, 291. ASCPF, CP 137 Melchiti, fols. 532r–540v, *Ristretto sopra i digiuni*: The report of Angelo da Servigliano 1769 testifies that the Maronites begin the fast of the Apostles only on 25 June, the fast of the Virgin only on 7 August and the fast of Christmas only on 12 December.

37 ASCPF, CP 137 Melchiti, fols. 532r–540v, *Ristretto sopra i digiuni*. F. Taoutel, 'Wathā'iq tāri-khiyya 'an Halab', *Al-Mashriq*, 42 (1948), 215–41; 228–9, mentions a reform of the fasting practices among the Armenians in Aleppo.



Notaras, Patriarch of Jerusalem, because of, as a Franciscan wrote, his 'zeal for the religion, or rather for his own interest'. He was accused of various innovations aimed at bringing Orthodox believers closer to Catholics or, in reality, at constructing a clear separation between the Greek Catholics, whom he intended to lead, and the Greek Orthodox tradition, which he contested. Among the reprehensible innovations he was accused of were his claim to be able to make a general exemption from the obligation to abstain from fish and his assertion that abstaining from fish was a sin.<sup>38</sup> He argued to the *Propaganda Fide* that the strictness of this prohibition induced conversions of Greek Melkites to the Latin rite, which was less severe.<sup>39</sup> Another of his arguments was that during the fasts of Christmas and of the Apostles, it was difficult to counterbalance abstinence from meat with vegetables and dairy products, and this problem was pushing Christians in the villages to convert to Islam. He also resorted to the arguments of Western scholarship, asserting that the Orthodox had introduced 'abuses' and 'innovations', and maintained that his real goal was to return to the ancient discipline of the Greek Church.<sup>40</sup> Finally, adopting Western norms concerning fasting and abstinence, he allowed women in childbirth and disabled persons to eat dairy and meat throughout the year with a physician's permission.<sup>41</sup> Apparently, the Patriarch Kirilūs al-Za'īm ratified Sayfi's positions, allowing consumption of fish and reducing the fast of the Apostles from 30 days to only 12. It seems that he asked the patriarchs of Constantinople and of Jerusalem to confirm his decisions, which they did.<sup>42</sup> After his death, his successor, Athanāsīyūs al-Dabbās, in order to win the goodwill of his flock, to undercut Sayfi's influence and to restore patriarchal authority, decided to

38 ASCPF, SC Melchiti, 1, fol. 360r, fols. 384r–387v, Biaggio di Salamanca. Spanish original fols. 380r–382r, Damascus, 1 April 1719; fol. 405r–v, *sommario*, fol. 407r, S. Atallah, superior of Holy-Savior, 17 August 1720. CP Melchiti 76, fols. 429r–431r, Arabic fol. 430r, Elias Fakhr, Aleppo, 15 April 1725. CP Melchiti, 77, fol. 66r, Circular letter of the Council of Constantinople, 1722.

39 ASCPF, SC Melchiti, 2, fols. 3r–5r, Athanāsīyūs al-Dabbās, 1724.

40 Girard, 'Nihil esse innovandum?' p. 346.

41 ASCPF, CP Melchiti 75, fol. 49v, *ristretto*, the Catholics of Acre. CP Melchiti 76, fols. 376r–377r, Antonio Nacchi, a Jesuit of Maronite origin, asserts that Sayfi allowed the consumption of dairy even on Wednesdays and Fridays. For an abstract of the arguments which Sayfi presented to the *Propaganda Fide* again in 1723, see CP Melchiti 80, p. 15. On the introduction of dispensation with a physician's permission, see Montanari, *La chère et l'esprit*, pp. 137–9, and Watts, 'Enlightened Fasting'.

42 ASCPF, CP Melchiti, 75, fols. 312r–v, Arabic 315r–v, Mansūr, Damascus, 13 January 1723. CP Melchiti, 137, fol. 586v, on the agreement of the patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem, the authenticity of which Cagno contested.

permit the eating of fish during Lent, as well as on Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year.<sup>43</sup>

But these positions within the Antiochian Church provoked a strong reaction on the part of the Orthodox hierarchy, which may have changed its position with respect to its previous confirmation of Kīrilūs al-Za‘īm’s decisions. In 1722, the Council of Constantinople, which Athanāsīyūs al-Dabbās from Antioch attended, condemned the ‘innovators’ of Antioch, who *inter alia*, allowed their faithful not to practice the Orthodox fasts. It also recalled the Latin ‘mistakes’, especially their obligation to fast on Saturday.<sup>44</sup> The same year a bishop sent by the Orthodox synod to Tripoli once again ordered abstinence from fish during the four fasts and on Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year, as well as the return to the traditional duration of the fasts.<sup>45</sup>

After the death of Patriarch Athanāsīyūs al-Dabbās in 1724, the patriarchate split between his designated successor, Sylvester of Cyprus, and Kīrilūs Tānās, the nephew of Aftīmyūs Sayfī. When Sylvester came from Constantinople to Aleppo in order to take solemn possession of his seat, on 5 November 1725, he was welcomed with a banquet, where fish was served on a fast day. Fulminating, he kicked the table, declared fish *harām*, illicit meat, and threatened the transgressors with excommunication. The notables of the congregation objected that eating fish during fasts had become a habit during the preceding patriarchate of Athanāsīyūs. But this argument infuriated him even more.<sup>46</sup> As we saw previously, the question of eating fish during a fast was not traditionally an important issue in the Greek Church, and the practice was far from uniform. But in the new context of rivalry between Catholics and Orthodox, it became an element of ‘a pedagogy of differentiation’, an external indicator of difference, although the main controversial field for identification and differentiation was theology.<sup>47</sup>

43 ASCPF, CP Melchiti, 75, fols. 405r–406r, copy of a letter of Athanāsīyūs to the French consul of Tripoli, 10 June 1723; fols. 312r–v, Arabic 315r–v, Mansūr, Damascus, 13 January 1723.

44 ASCPF, CP Melchiti, 77, fols. 66r, 70v, abstract of a circular letter of the Council of Constantinople, 1722. Text in Greek and Latin in *Sacrorum conciliorum nova, et amplissima collectio*, ed. G.D. Mansi, 54 vols. (Paris, 1901–27), 37: 127–220 (Condamnation of the Saturday fast chap. VII, cols. 201–4).

45 ASCPF, CP, 75, fols. 399r–404v, copy of a report of the Jesuit Petitqueux, Tripoli, 27 April 1723.

46 Nāwufītūs Idlibī (Edelby), *Asāqifa al-Rūm al-Malakiyyīn bi Halab* (Aleppo, 1983), pp. 141–2.

47 A. Girard, ‘Quand les “grecs-catholiques” dénonçaient les “grecs-orthodoxes”: la controverse confessionnelle au Proche-Orient arabe après le schisme de 1724’, in *Discours et représentations du différent confessionnel à l’époque moderne*, ed. C. Bernat and H. Bost (Turnhout, 2012), pp. 157–70.

Fasting was a recurrent issue among Greek Catholics until at least the beginning of the nineteenth century. As early as 1716, the Holy Office condemned the innovations of Aftīmyūs Sayfī and ordered his community to return to the 'rites and customs of the Fathers'. These decisions were repeated in 1717 and 1718.<sup>48</sup> When Kīrilūs Tānās asked to be recognized as the legitimate Patriarch of Antioch in 1729, Rome asked him in return to take an oath in which he commits to scrupulously respect the Greek rites and customs, renouncing the innovations of his uncle Aftīmyūs Sayfī. He made the pledge; but in 1731 he began to complain that, on account of this oath, his authority was contested. He sent a large number of letters to the *Propaganda Fide* in the following months, explaining the impossibility of insuring compliance with the Roman decisions and saying that people were joining the Latin Church and giving their financial support to the Latin missionaries rather than submitting to their patriarch and their clerics.<sup>49</sup> But Rome remained inflexible. At the Melkite synod of Saint Saviour, in 1736, Kīrilūs prepared a circular letter asking for the Greek rites to be respected and explaining why he allowed some exemptions. This letter, however, was never published because it could trigger a prosecution by the Ottoman authorities against the bishops and their flock.<sup>50</sup>

It seems that people living in the countryside, as well as in the cities, were not inclined to respect the rules, so that Kīrilūs and other representatives of the Melkites advocated a reduction of the length of fasts and an authorization for the consumption of fish.<sup>51</sup> The patriarch was unable to impose his authority in this matter, as in others. He was confronted by the fact that he was not officially recognized by the Sublime Porte and had to live under semi-clandestine conditions on Mount Lebanon, while the Orthodox Church heavily persecuted Catholics in Aleppo and Damascus and tried to introduce pro-Orthodox bishops in the sees which had converted to Catholicism. Not only did he lack the Ottoman firman, or royal decree, but also the official Roman investiture—it was only in 1744 that he finally received the pallium from Rome, as an official confirmation of his position. Missionaries attracted the Melkites with the claim that they had the power to exempt them from fasts and abstinences. Moreover, as a number of the Melkites lived among the Maronites, who followed reduced rules, they were encouraged to change denomination. Indeed, at that time, Melkites were migrating to Mount Lebanon and Galilee, even

48 ASCPF, CP Melchiti, vol. 137, fols. 592r–593v.

49 ASCPF, SC Melchiti, vol. 2, fols. 424r–425r, Kīrilūs Tānās, 25 December 1731; fol. 422r, 27 February 1732; fol. 423r–v, copy of a letter of Kīrilūs Tānās to Giovanni Amione.

50 ASCPF, CP, Melchiti, 137, fol. 595r–v.

51 ASCPF, CP, Melchiti, 80, *Ristretto delli dubi da esaminare nella SP de PF deputata della S di NS Papa Benedetto XIV intorno alle materie de' Greci Melchiti*, pp. 11–20.

Egypt, and settled in areas with a mixed population, where they had to adapt. A number of them were hired by non-Christian rulers, Druses or Sunnis, and they could not avoid eating with them when they were supposed to be fasting.<sup>52</sup> In a letter, Kīrilūs explains that, if he did not exempt his community from abstinence during the three fasts, he and his bishops 'would go to graze the cows' after two years. He asserted that whole villages had converted to Islam some decades before because of the difficulty of the fasts and the refusal of the patriarch to grant them an exemption; but the argument seems dubious.<sup>53</sup> Finally, the authority of the patriarch was also contested by his own clergy. Two orders of monks caused controversy. The Salvatorians, founded by Aftīmyūs Sayfī and consisting especially of natives from Damascus or Galilee, had a reputation for being relaxed with regard to the fasts, whereas the Shuwayrī, the majority of whom were native to Aleppo, were more rigorous. The two orders fought with each other about the prohibition of meat for monks, the Salvatorians allowing its consumption in their rules, while the Shuwayrī banned it absolutely, in conformity with the common Eastern monastic tradition.<sup>54</sup>

Pope Benedict XIV sent a bishop, Emmanuel de Saint-Albert, as an Apostolic Delegate in order to require obedience to his decree *Demandatam* (24 December 1743). De Saint-Albert explained how, when visiting the larger village of Forzol in November 1744, on the road between Acre and Damascus, he read the pope's decision to the inhabitants. The notables answered that, while good Catholics, they would never submit and that they would find an agreement with their bishop. In the city of Baalbek, he encountered the same opposition on the part of the majority of Greek Catholic inhabitants. And in another village, inhabited by 'heretics', he could personally witness that, instead of observing abstinence strictly, even the Orthodox ate fish and dairy on Wednesdays and Fridays.<sup>55</sup>

After Kīrilūs Tānās, the successive patriarchs were not more successful in imposing the traditional fasts and abstinences. In 1769, the *Propaganda Fide* once again was asked whether it was possible to tolerate Christians who, forgetful of their rites, conformed to the more relaxed practice which already was in use among them. The cardinals decided to ask the Eastern prelates for

52 ASCPF, CP, 137, fol. 594r.

53 ASCPF, SC, Melchiti, 2, fols. 424r–425v, 25 December 1731. See also the other letters of Kīrilūs on the same topic: fol. 442r, 1 February 1732, fols. 525r–528r (Ital. trans.), 526r (Arabic); 29 August 1732, fols. 530r–v (Ital. trans.), 529r (Arabic). *Ibid.*, fol. 535r–v, 1 September 1732, fols. 540r (Ital. trans.), 538r (Arabic).

54 ASCPF, SC, Melchiti, vol. 2, fols. 505r–504v, 531r–v (Ital. trans.), 532r–v (Arabic). See Heyberger, 'Pro nunc nihil respondendum'.

55 ASCPF, CP Melchiti 83, fol. 388r, Emmanuel de Saint Albert, January 1745.

information. The Armenian and the Syrian patriarchs did not answer. The Maronites were not questioned, since in 1769 the *Propaganda Fide* had confirmed again that fish and wine were allowed during Lent among them. The Melkite patriarch sent a long answer, advocating once again approval of the innovative practices widespread among his faithful. He asserted that on Fridays and Wednesdays everyone—regular and secular clergy as well as laymen, Catholics as well as schismatics—ate fish; that all Catholics were accustomed to only 12 days of fasting for the Apostles' fast and to eating fish during Lent; that the week of dairy before Lent was not yet observed; and that the Christmas fast was generally reduced to 15 days instead of forty. The patriarch explained that he knew about these infractions; nevertheless, he had good motives for concealing the problem, because he acknowledged the scarcity of food during Lent, and he was aware that the other denominations, especially the Maronites, were not returning to the previous severity of fasts. Finally, he did not want to push people into sin, if they consciously transgressed the rules.<sup>56</sup> Against the argument that Catholics could not change their customs in order to avoid differentiating themselves from schismatics and causing scandals, he objected strongly by invoking the missionaries' argument, mentioned above, that the Greek Orthodox consider fasting to be the most important practice of their religion and that the substance of their religion consists solely of strictly observing the rites. Pope Benedict XIV's requirement that Catholics must rigorously observe the rites merely convinced schismatics to be even more stubborn.

### 3 Rome and the Issue of Fasting

As stated above, fasting is a question of custom, not of dogma. Rome answered *dubia* (doubts) coming from the missionary field. *Dubia* do not concern errors of doctrine, and do not require condemnations or anathemas. They are hesitations about a fact or a particular point of law. Doubts are located inside orthodoxy, within a space of discussion and negotiation. They are a common way of dialectical exchange between the field and the head of the Church. They generally appear as a question addressed to an authority, who has to answer. They belong to the literary genre of the *disputatio* common in resolving theological issues concerning knowledge. They also contribute to controlling those to whom ecclesiastical power has been delegated, as well as the simple faithful.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> ASCPF, CP Melchiti 83, fol. 535r.

<sup>57</sup> P. Broggio et al., 'Le temps des doutes. Les sacrements et l'Eglise aux dimensions du monde', *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome, Italie et Méditerranée*, 121.1 (2009), 5–22.

The position of the Roman Church concerning the 'Eastern rites' has been made clear by Aurélien Girard.<sup>58</sup> Like other dogmatic and disciplinary points, it developed progressively during the seventeenth century, through the experience of the missionary field and the advance of scholarship, until a definitive rule was established. From the view that the Eastern rites and customs were 'abuses' to be corrected, a more accommodating position emerged, according to which these were tolerable to the extent that they helped encourage schismatics to return to the 'Union' and did not contradict Catholic theological definitions. The mixing of traditions on the initiative of the clergy or, worse, of the faithful, became the greatest evil. The reply of the Holy Office to the 'doubts' of Aftīmyūs Sayfī (1 and 9 June 1718) seems to be the first expression of the explicit ban on innovation and the clear obligation to remain faithful to the Eastern rites: no innovation is tolerated, and the suppliant has to be warned and urged to preserve the rites and ceremonies which are commonly in use in the present Greek Church.<sup>59</sup> The concern was not to allow an individual bishop to change the tradition, not to tolerate disorder and not to jeopardize the perspectives of a return to the 'Union' of all the Greeks in a context which until 1727 was considered favourable.<sup>60</sup> This warning was repeated several times during the course of the eighteenth century. In the papal brief *Quamquam Sollicitudini* (13 August 1729), in which Benedict XIII (1724–1730) recognized Kīrīlūs Tānās as the Greek patriarch of Antioch, he was asked to swear, as we have seen, that he would scrupulously respect the Greek rites and return to the traditional practices, abolished by his uncle Aftīmyūs Sayfī.<sup>61</sup> In his decree *Demandatam*, Benedict XIV restated, with insistence, that the innovations of Sayfī were to be revoked and that the patriarch must preserve the rites and customs of the Greek Church, 'transmitted by the Fathers'. The text especially dwells on the rules concerning fasting and abstinence. In this decree, the main preoccupation of the pope was to affirm his authority and to put a stop to innovations which produced protests from those in the Greek denomination, as well as conflicts and competition between Greek Catholics, Latin missionaries and Maronites.<sup>62</sup> On 26 July 1755, in the encyclical *Allatae sunt*, answering the

58 Girard, 'Nihil esse innovandum'.

59 *Sacrorum conciliorum ... collectio*, ed. Mansi, 46: 25 and 9 June 1718, the Holy Office answered the 'doubts' of Aftimiyus Sayfi: 'Nihil esse innovandum, sed monendum oratorem et hortandum, ut servet et custodiat ritus et caeremonias, quas communiter in praxi servat de praesenti ecclesia Graeca.'

60 CP, Melchiti, 75, fol. 13v, *sommario*, fols. 16r, 20r.

61 *Iuris pontificis De Propaganda Fide pars prima completens bullas brevia acta SS a congregationis institutione ...*, ed. R. De Martinis, 8 vols. (Rome, 1888–1907), 2: 414.

62 *Ibid.*, 3: 125–7.

question of a missionary from Bassorah (Iraq) as to whether Latin missionaries had the power to exempt Eastern Christians from abstention from fish during fasts, Benedict XIV recalled the numerous previous decisions of the *Propaganda Fide* rejecting any innovations.<sup>63</sup> Further *dubia* addressed to the *Propaganda fide* required new examinations of the issue, which resulted in a return to Roman discipline as expressed in the decisions of 1764, 1771 and 1781. As stated in the meeting of 1781, the repetition of the requests made it clear that the Roman decrees were never, or hardly ever, implemented.

Nevertheless, the position of Rome did not alter. Once the rule had been set out in an official document, it remained the absolute point of reference. As with the Maronites, once the synod of 1736 had established more relaxed rules, it was not possible to require officially more severe regulation. On the other hand, when the Maronite Patriarch Istifān decided to exempt his community from eating meat on the Friday of the newly introduced feast of the Holy Heart of Jesus, the Roman authorities condemned this innovation, with an argument previously used for the Melkites: that the Roman See only had the power to exempt occasionally from abstinence and for a very specific reason.<sup>64</sup>

With regard to the Greeks, the successive texts released by the pontifical authority repeated that there was a firm Greek tradition to which the Melkites of Antioch had to conform. Therefore, before confirming the preceding decisions, the advice of an expert was requested, in 1743 and also in 1781. Even more than for other countries, such as America or China, the Roman Catholic Church intended to base its decisions concerning Eastern Christianity on scholarly knowledge, which was an important concern in its competition with Protestants on the history of Christianity. The advice given in 1743 and in 1781 was based on witnesses from missionaries or Eastern priests in the field and on historical scholarship.<sup>65</sup> It is worth noting that the adviser in 1781, Giorgi

63 Ibid., 3: 620–21.

64 ASCPF, CP 135 Maroniti, fols. 43r–48v, 22 March 1777 *super rebus maronitarum*.

65 On Gregory the Protosyncellos, see n. 14 above; on Jacques Goar (O.F.P, 1610–1653), see n. 16 above; on Leo Allatius, see n. 15; on Louis Thomassin (Oratorian, 1619–1697), see n. 24 above. Moreover, Cagno mentions *Armenopolus orientalis*, by which he means Constantin Harmenopoulos (1320–1383), whose compilation of a corpus of canon and civil laws, entitled *Hexabiblos* or *Procheiron nomon* (1345), was in use as a juridical code until the 20th century; see *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan et al., 3 vols. (New York, 1991), 2: 902. Théodore Balsamon, a great canonist of the 12th century, is quoted vaguely about what books were used; see L. Bréhier, 'Balsamon (Théodore)', *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique*, 6: 419–21 and 'Balsamon', *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 1: 249. The sources Cagno used to prepare his report are almost the same as those used for the preparation of the decisions of Benedict XIV concerning the Melkites, 1743. See Heyberger, 'Pro nunc nihil respondendum', p. 545, n. 13.

Cagno, also used non-Catholic sources, like the Arabic *Horologion* printed in 1702 in Walachia for Athanās̄yūs al-Dabbās, a *Typikon* and the *Catechism of the Moscovites* (of Moghila, Kiev, 1643). He also referred to the testimony of Stephan Gerlach ('although a man of another religion'), who wrote to Martin Crusius about Greek practice in 1575.<sup>66</sup> In classic fashion, Cagno attempted to demonstrate the consensus of all the sources; but on a number of points he was unable to come up with an indisputable position on the norms and on historical practice which overcame the contradictions in the testimonies and in the affirmations of scholars, and thus entering into a never-ending historiographical debate.

Yet, because the principles regarding the issue had been established and repeated several times since the beginning of the eighteenth century, Cagno submitted his own opinions to the canonical decisions previously made by the Roman pontiff. He corrected the historical evidence in order to make it appear in conformity with the official position and to pre-empt any contestations and new variations. 'We have to take in consideration the universal customs and discipline of the Greek Church in its official ecclesiastical books, its canons and the historical monuments of the nation', he wrote.<sup>67</sup> He wanted to limit, as far as possible, the differences between the various testimonies, arguing that, if, for instance, there were varying practices concerning the length of the Christmas' fast in Constantinople in the fifteenth century, this did not mean that it had not been reduced to a single norm during the subsequent centuries, as had happened in the Latin Church. Furthermore, the diversity did not mean, in his opinion, that everyone could decide freely. It meant, instead, that the highest authority of the Greek Church (the patriarch of Constantinople) had exceptionally granted temporary dispensations from the universal rule. In Cagno's view, unity of discipline under a single authority was the only possible conception of the Church.<sup>68</sup> Without fear of anachronism, he aimed to assert through his historical demonstration a universal coherent rule which was exclusively under the safeguard of the pontifical authority. As with other issues, Rome was the best point of reference for Greek traditions; and papal decisions were regarded as an irrevocable source for Catholic scholarship.

#### 4 Conclusion

Whereas fasting was previously not a question of dogma and did not require unified and universally applied rules, even within a particular denomination,

66 ASCPF, CP, Melchiti, vol. 137, fols. 580v–582r.

67 Ibid., fol. 589v.

68 Ibid., fols. 584r–585v.



in the eighteenth century this issue became entangled in the context of the increasing competition between not only Orthodox and Catholics but even between different Catholic denominations, as well as of general trends in all the Eastern churches to reinforce the control of the clergy over the faithful and to standardize the rules and the practices.

The action of Roman Catholic missionaries, however, instead of helping to reduce the differences and the incongruities in the rules and practices, contributed to producing even more complication. On the other hand, the weakness of the local hierarchies and the pluralism of authorities did not allow the enforcement of standardization and the strict application of rules on the faithful. During the entire eighteenth century, Rome tried to clarify and normalize the rules concerning fasting and abstinence in each denomination. But especially among the Melkites, each decision was contested, and the offices of the *Propaganda Fide* constantly had to answer new questions concerning the application of these decisions. Overall, it was a question of authority: the practice had to fit in with the Roman authority's definition of the 'Greek rite'.

This effort to clarify the issue was based on scholarly research. But the investigation of the historical sources concerning fasting among the Eastern Christians did not lead to a clear conclusion; on the contrary, it further complicated the issue. Nevertheless, once the Roman pontiff had officially fixed the doctrine, in the sense of standardizing the Greek 'rite', Roman Catholic scholars tried to justify the official position through arguments which paid little respect to the historical evidence.

## Away with All the Greeks: Ancients, Moderns and Arabs in Étienne Fourmont's 'Oratio de lingua Arabica' (1715)

Alexander Bevilacqua

The quarrels of the ancients and the moderns of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century France famously attempted to determine the appropriate status of ancient Greeks and Romans in modern European culture.<sup>1</sup> But the peoples of classical antiquity were not the only ones summoned to the brawl. As Larry Norman has shown, the so-called 'Ancient' party defended reading the classics on the grounds that it allowed one to experience cultural difference.<sup>2</sup> Well before the quarrel broke out in 1687, Pierre-Daniel Huet, one of the 'Ancients', had argued that the nations of Asia possessed a particular 'esprit poétique' that had led to the genesis of fiction.<sup>3</sup> In his response to Charles Perrault's *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes* (1688–1692), Huet added that Homer's aesthetics should be judged not according to modern French taste, but by comparison to the 'spirit [*génie*] of the people of Asia, among which he is believed to have been born'.<sup>4</sup> The extended comparisons that Homer drew (and which Perrault criticized) found parallels, Huet wrote, in 'the books of the

1 Among the ample literature on the *querelle* see, in particular, M. Fumaroli, 'Les abeilles et les araignées' in *La Querelle des anciens et des modernes*, ed. A.-M. Lecoq (Paris, 2001), pp. 7–218; D. Edelstein, *The Enlightenment: A Genealogy* (Chicago, 2010); L.F. Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient: Literature and History in Early Modern France* (Chicago, 2011) and references there.

2 Norman, *Shock of the Ancient*, ch. 9.

3 Pierre-Daniel Huet, 'Traité de l'origine des romans', in Jean de Segrais [Madame de La Fayette], *Zayde, histoire espagnole* (Paris, 1670), pp. 3–99 (sigs. A2r–G2v); p. 12 (sig. A6v). See A. Bevilacqua and J. Loop, 'The Qur'an in Comparison and the Birth of "Scriptures"', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 20 (2018), 149–74; 154–5. On Huet more broadly, see A.G. Shelford, *Transforming the Republic of Letters: Pierre-Daniel Huet and European Intellectual Life, 1650–1720* (Rochester, 2007), and on his Indological interests, see G. Ducœur, 'P.D. Huet et la diffusion de la littérature sanskrite au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *La place de la Normandie dans la diffusion des savoirs: du livre manuscrit à la bibliothèque virtuelle*, ed. J.-P. Hervieu et al. (Avranches, 2006), 191–6; id., 'Les religions indiennes comme *argumentatio* dans les *Almetanae Quaestiones* de Pierre-Daniel Huet', *Dix-septième siècle*, 259 (2013), 281–99; id., 'Brahmâ dans la théorie des Moïses de Pierre-Daniel Huet (1630–1721)', in *Le savoir des religions. Fragments d'historiographie religieuse*, ed. D. Barbu et al. (Gollion, 2014), pp. 445–472.

4 Huet, 'Lettre à Monsieur Perrault sur le "Parallèle"', in Lecoq, ed., *La querelle*, pp. 381–408; 383.

Persians and Indians, the Alcoran and Arabic books', as well as in the Song of Songs.<sup>5</sup> In a later response to Perrault, he likewise argued that Perrault's critique of Homeric style drew on culturally specific norms: 'What would the good M. Perrault say, if he were to read the poem of Tograï, which is so esteemed among the Arabs, and which he would find to be much more figurative than Pindar?'<sup>6</sup> Evoking Japanese literature and the Psalms, he concluded, 'such is the genius of the Orientals, who feel no less justified in holding their taste to be the measure of good taste, than M. Perrault does in holding it to be his'.<sup>7</sup> In other words, from its earliest articulations, the *querelle* involved the relationship of modern Europe not just with the culture of ancient Greece and Rome, but with the literatures of Asia as well.

The global relevance of the debate continued to be worked out in the second major exchange, the so-called *querelle d'Homère*, which erupted in 1714 with the publication of Antoine Houdar de la Motte's French verse translation of the *Iliad*.<sup>8</sup> In his response to Houdar de la Motte's prefatory 'Discours sur Homère', one of the Ancients, Jean Boivin, again invoked modern Asian people. Boivin held the chair of Greek at the Collège Royal, the non-degree granting institution of higher learning that King François I founded in Paris in 1530 (and which lives on as today's Collège de France). In his *Apologie d'Homère, et Bouclier d'Achille*, which appeared in 1715, he wrote:

Not being able to stand the people of an era or of a country distant from our own, of a different character from that of people of the present era, or of the country in which we live, is not to be able to stand the air of foreignness in a foreigner; it is to wish that a Turk, an Indian, a Chinese man think and act like us, lack all of the defects of their nation and possess all the virtues of ours. As for me, what I like in a Chinese man is a Chinese air, are Chinese manners: and I would resent a painter who, having

5 Ibid. Huet's arguments about a specific 'Oriental' aesthetics ultimately derived from the opposition between the 'Attic' and 'Asiatic' styles in classical oratory. See Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, XI.16. See also U. von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, 'Asianismus und Atticismus', *Hermes*, 35 (1900), 1–52; G. Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton, 1963), pp. 301–3; id., *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World, 300 B.C.–A.D. 300* (Princeton, 1972), pp. 97–100; M. Fumaroli, *L'Age de l'éloquence: Rhétorique et 'res literaria' de la Renaissance au seuil de l'époque classique* (Geneva, 1980), pp. 212–22, and esp. 219n; id., *L'École du silence: le sentiment des images au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1994), pp. 343–65.

6 Pierre-Daniel Huet, *Huetiana, ou pensées diverses* (Paris, 1782), pp. 27–8. See Bevilacqua and Loop, 'The Qur'an in Comparison', pp. 154–5.

7 Huet, *Huetiana*, p. 28.

8 Antoine Houdar de la Motte, *L'Iliade, poème, avec un discours sur Homère par Monsieur de La Motte* (Amsterdam, 1714).

promised to paint the Emperor of China for me, had portrayed him dressed in the French manner.<sup>9</sup>

In Boivin's argument, appreciation of the ancients for their very alterity was bound up with appreciation of 'Turks', Indians and Chinese for what made them different from the French. Cosmopolitanism was supposed to hold across both space and time. This did not mean that, elsewhere, Boivin and the Ancient party eschewed special pleading on behalf of the Greeks and Romans.<sup>10</sup> But writers like Boivin did make a strong argument for appreciating alterity wherever it might be found.

The same year that Boivin published *Apologie d'Homère*, a young scholar was called to lecture on the virtues of Arabic at the Collège Royal. Upon Antoine Galland's death in February 1715, Étienne Fourmont, then thirty-two, was elected to be his replacement as chair of Arabic at the Collège Royal. His first task was to give the customary inaugural oration. Inaugural lectures in Latin were a European academic tradition, perhaps even a staid genre by this time. Alastair Hamilton has cautioned against placing too much stock in these utterances: 'Such orations were intended to attract patronage and the arguments were usually repetitions of traditional commonplaces rather than the true convictions of the speaker.'<sup>11</sup> This is indeed a warning to be heeded. Moreover, one of the most important lessons of the new history of scholarship is to study what early modern scholars did, not what they said.<sup>12</sup> Even so, Fourmont's oration—which was not published in his lifetime, but which survives in two manuscript copies, both held in the Bibliothèque nationale de France—repays attention, revealing as it does how to assert the importance of the Arabic

9 Jean Boivin, *Apologie d'Homère, et Bouclier d'Achille* (Paris, 1715), pp. 47–8: 'Ne pouvoir souffrir dans les hommes d'un siècle ou d'un país éloigné du nôtre, un caractère différent de celui des hommes du siècle present, ou du país où nous vivons, c'est ne pouvoir souffrir l'air étranger dans un étranger; c'est vouloir qu'un Turc, un Indien, un Chinois pensent et agissent comme nous, n'ayent aucun des défauts de leur nation, et ayent toutes les vertus de la nôtre. Pour moy ce qui me plaît dans un Chinois, c'est l'air Chinois, ce sont les manières Chinoises: et je sçaurois très mauvais gré à un peintre, qui s'étant engagé à me faire le portrait de l'Empereur de la Chine, me l'auroit peint habillé à la Française.' Quoted in Norman, *Shock of the Ancient*, pp. 135–6; my translation.

10 Norman, *Shock of the Ancient*, pp. 136–49 and passim.

11 A. Hamilton, 'Arabic Studies in the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *Philologia Arabica: Arabische studiën en drukken in de Nederlanden in de 16e en 17e eeuw*, ed. F. De Nave (Antwerp, 1986), pp. xciv–cviii; cii.

12 A. Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1983), pp. 1–8.

language in the dying days of Louis XIV.<sup>13</sup> It is best read in the context of the *querelle d'Homère*, as a *paragone* (Italian), or *parallèle* (French), the genre first developed in Renaissance Italy that staged a contest between ancients and moderns.<sup>14</sup> Fourmont's ideas are worth recovering not just to expand our view of the ramifications of the *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, but also because in the course of the eighteenth century European writers would continue to ponder the place of non-classical literatures in the pantheon of human achievement. The vernacular authors of the European Enlightenment certainly took an interest in non-European literatures; and a scholar like William Jones did much to draw attention to Persian, and later Sanskrit, literature. But in valuing foreign literary traditions, late eighteenth-century authors trod in the footsteps of their scholarly predecessors. Fourmont's oration is a reminder that the genealogy of Enlightenment literary cosmopolitanism goes back to the scholarly traditions of early modern humanism.<sup>15</sup>

Étienne Fourmont (*l'ainé*, the elder) is not the darling of modern historians of scholarship.<sup>16</sup> He served as chair of Arabic at the Collège Royal from 1715

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- 13 Étienne Fourmont's 'Oratio de lingua Arabica' exists in two MS copies in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (hereafter BnF). The first is held among Fourmont's own papers, MS Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises (hereafter NAF) 8972, where it is listed as 'Discours latin sur la langue arabe, prononcé à mon installation au Collège royal,' fols. 2–13. The second is among the papers of his nephew, Michel-Ange-André Leroux Deshauterayes, BnF NAF 8943, fols. 54–64. Deshauterayes appears to have copied it out in preparation for composing his own oration when he was appointed to his uncle's chair after the latter's death. In BnF NAF 8943 (collected and bound at a later date), it is immediately followed by a different 'Oratio,' fols. 65–94, presumably Deshauterayes's own effort, which is a working copy, and contains crossings out and insertions, unlike his copy of Fourmont's text, which is clean. The lecture was translated from BnF NAF 8972 into French by J. Fernet, S.J., as an appendix to C. Leung, 'The Language of the "Other": Étienne Fourmont (1683–1745), Chinese, Hebrew and Arabic in Pre-Enlightenment France,' PhD diss. (University of Chicago, 1993), pp. 404–13.
- 14 On the Italian prehistory of the quarrel, see Fumaroli, 'Les abeilles et les araignées,' pp. 24–92. Well before Traiano Boccalini's *Ragguagli* and Alessandro Tassoni's *Paragone*, Benedetto Accolti had written a *Dialogus de praestantia virorum sui aevi*; see R. Black, *Benedetto Accolti and the Florentine Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1985), ch. 8.
- 15 A number of scholars have undertaken this task, not least A. Hamilton and F. Richard, *André du Ryer and Oriental Studies in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford, 2004); J. Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger: Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 2013); id., 'Arabic Poetry as Teaching Material in Early Modern Grammars and Textbooks,' in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe*, ed. J. Loop et al. (Leiden, 2017), pp. 230–51 and references there. See also R.M. Dainotto, *Europe (In Theory)* (Durham, NC, 2007).
- 16 Étienne Fourmont makes brief appearances in a number of scholarly treatments of Sinology, though he has not held the attention of modern scholars for very long, with the notable exception of C. Leung. See, e.g., D.B. Honey, *Incense at the Altar: Pioneering*

until his death on 19 December 1745. After his death, his students Joseph de Guignes and Michel-Ange-André Leroux Deshautesrayes boasted of his multilingualism:

To properly appreciate his prodigious facility, it is enough to know that he had learned Latin, Greek, Biblical Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Chaldean [i.e., Aramaic], Samaritan, Rabbinic Hebrew, Ethiopic and Chinese; that he had a fair acquaintance with Turkish, Persian, Tibetan and Indian; and, finally that he was able to understand all books written in English, in Italian, in Spanish and even in German [!].<sup>17</sup>

In addition to this immense linguistic range, Fourmont's other distinctive trait was 'a particular taste for poetry that few people have taken as far as he did'.<sup>18</sup> In other words, his two students portray a figure uniquely positioned for the comparative study of literature.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, Fourmont approached Arabic from a profoundly comparative perspective. In this, he resembled his French predecessors—not just the generation of Barthélemy d'Herbelot (who died in 1695) and Eusèbe Renaudot (who would die in 1720), but also the earlier generation of Gilbert Gaulmin (who died in 1665), who was reputed to have mastered not

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*Sinologists and the Development of Classical Chinese Philology* (New Haven, Ct., 2001), pp. 20–2; C. Leung, *Étienne Fourmont (1683–1745): Oriental and Chinese Languages in Eighteenth-Century France* (Leuven, 2002); U. App, *The Birth of Orientalism* (Philadelphia, 2010), pp. 191–6; Alexander Statman, 'China Enchanted: Transformations of Knowledge in the Enlightenment world', PhD diss. (Stanford University, 2017), p. 58 on Fourmont.

17 Michel Leroux Deshautesrayes and Joseph de Guignes, 'Abrégé de la vie et des ouvrages de M. Fourmont', in Étienne Fourmont, *Réflexions sur l'origine, l'histoire et la succession des anciens peuples, chaldéens, hébreux, phéniciens, égyptiens, grecs etc. jusqu'au tems de Cyrus*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1747), 2: 1–15; 15: 'Pour juger sainement de sa facilité prodigieuse, il suffit de sçavoir qu'il avoit appris le Latin, le Grec, l'Hébreu, l'Arabe, le Syriaque, le Chaldéen, le Samaritain, le Rabbinique, l'Ethiopien, et le Chinois; qu'il avoit une teinture assez grande du Turc, du Persan, du Thibetan et de l'Indien; enfin qu'il étoit en état d'entendre tous les Livres écrits en Anglois, en Italien, en Espagnol, et même en Allemand.'

18 Leroux Deshautesrayes and de Guignes, 'Abrégé', p. 15: 'Il avoit sur tout pour la Poësie un gout que peu de gens ont porté aussi loin que lui.'

19 These scholars had ambitious ideas of their own; de Guignes argued that the Chinese were an Egyptian colony. On de Guignes, see R. Minuti, *Oriente barbarico e storiografia settecentesca. Rappresentazioni della storia dei Tartari nella cultura francese del XVIII secolo* (Venice, 1994); App, *Birth of Orientalism*, ch. 4; J.G.A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion. Vol. 4: Barbarians, Savages and Empires* (Cambridge, 2005); N. Wolloch, 'Joseph de Guignes and Enlightenment Notions of Material Progress', *Intellectual History Review*, 21 (2011), 435–48; A. Statman, 'Fusang: The Enlightenment Story of the Chinese Discovery of America', *Isis*, 107 (2016), 1–25; id., 'China Enchanted', pp. 58–66 and passim.

just Arabic, Hebrew and Turkish, but also Armenian and Persian.<sup>20</sup> With Fourmont, the increasing range of late humanist Oriental scholarship not only broke out of the Semitic family of languages, but even out of West Asia.

The manuscript of a *mémoire* that Fourmont read at the Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, but never published, reveals how he thought about Arabic and Chinese, and their position among other Asian languages.<sup>21</sup> Written in 1721, the *mémoire* takes stock of the state of Oriental studies in France, outlining Oriental languages and listing books that need to be acquired (or written) in order to advance their study. Replete with more rich detail than I can summarize here, the *mémoire* is part and parcel of the effort begun under Jean-Baptiste Colbert and continued by the abbé Jean-Paul Bignon to acquire and organize Oriental books in Paris.<sup>22</sup> Fourmont writes, ‘there is no city in Europe that has as many Oriental books as in Paris. No princes have spent as much to acquire them as our kings, and especially Louis XIV. Yet there is no place where Oriental languages are as neglected as they are in France.’<sup>23</sup> His goal throughout the *mémoire* is to help bring about what he calls a ‘Renaissance of Oriental languages’ in Paris.<sup>24</sup>

The *mémoire* organizes the languages of Asia into two groups: first the Semitic and Near Eastern ones (Hebrew, Chaldean [Aramaic], Syriac, Samaritan, Arabic, Ethiopic, Coptic, as well as Persian, Turkish and Armenian), and then the languages of South and East Asia, including Sanskrit (‘le Bramine’), Malay, Thai, Balinese, Japanese, Chinese and Tatar. He breaks each language down into subgroups. For example, Arabic encompasses Qur’anic Arabic as well as ‘vulgaire’, the language commonly spoken in Arabia, Syria, Egypt and Morocco.<sup>25</sup> He lists books that have been written to ‘assist the learning of all these

20 F. Secret, ‘Gilbert Gaulmin et l’histoire comparée des religions’, *Revue de l’histoire des religions*, 177 (1970), 35–63.

21 This is BnF NAF 8973, ‘Mémoire sur les Langues Orientales’, fols. 1r–38v. It is recorded as having been read at the Académie but left unpublished in Fourmont, *Reflexions sur l’origine, l’histoire et la succession des anciens peuples*, 1:18 (n. 52 in the list of “dissertations”).

22 H.A. Omont, *Missions archéologiques françaises en Orient aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1902); A. Bevilacqua, *Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment* (Cambridge MA, 2018), ch. 1; A. Hamilton, *Johann Michael Wansleben’s Travels in the Levant, 1671–1674. An Annotated Edition of His Italian Report* (Leiden, 2018).

23 BnF NAF 8973, fol. 1v: ‘Il n’y a point de ville en Europe ou il y ait autant de livres orientaux qu’à Paris/ Point de Princes qui pour en acquérir ayent fait autant de depenses que nos roys et surtout Louis 14./Point de lieu cependant ou les Langues orientales soient plus negligées qu’en France.’

24 Ibid., fol. 35v: ‘Renaissance des langues orientales’.

25 Ibid., fols. 2r–3v.

languages', then provides a brief, selective survey of 'other manuscript and printed books that exist in each of these languages'.<sup>26</sup> In the case of Arabic, as of other languages, what is available in manuscript dwarfs what is available in print: 'What has been printed does not deserve to be spoken of, and the Library itself contains countless [manuscript] volumes.'<sup>27</sup> Indeed, at the end of the survey, Fourmont writes, 'one finds in the Royal Library roomfuls of books in all of these languages, and about theology, philosophy, rhetoric, grammar and poetry, natural history, history of all the empires of the Orient, histories of all illustrious men from all parts, mathematics, geomancy, chiromancy, etc.'<sup>28</sup> He concludes bitterly,

but all of this remains unknown, and uncultivated, on account of a lack of labourers, and this while in Latin and in Greek the same paths are ret-rodden again and again. And every day new additions of immense books are made, which are almost of no use and which are often spoiled instead of being improved.<sup>29</sup>

Thus the *mémoire* accurately reflects the contrast between the number of books that had been brought to Paris and the scanty amount that had actually been read or edited and published.

Fourmont's *mémoire* is not merely descriptive; it also delineates a desirable course of action. In some detail, he establishes which books need to be printed in which languages, with an emphasis on grammars and dictionaries. He is a severe judge of what is available, which he describes in granular detail. In terms of Arabic grammars, he writes, 'there is not a single one that is acceptable'.<sup>30</sup> The poor quality of existing dictionaries and grammars, as well as their paucity, provided an urgent reason to produce more of them, as did the

26 Ibid., fol. 4r: 'livres composez pour faciliter la connoissance de toutes ces langues'; fol. 12r: 'les autres ouvrages imprimez et manuscrits qui existent en chacune de ces langues'.

27 Ibid., fol. 12v: 'Ce que nous avons d'imprimé, ne merite pas que l'on en parle et la meme Bibliotheque contient des volumes Infinis.'

28 Ibid., fol. 13v: 'Cependant on trouve dans la Bibliotheque Royale/Plein des chambres de Livres en toutes ces langues et des Livres/De Theologie/De Philosophie/De Rhetorique/De Grammaire et de Poesie/D'Histoire Naturelle/D'Histoire pour tous les empires de l'Orient/D'histoire des hommes illustres de toutes les parties/des Mathematiques/De Geomantie/De Chiromantie & c.'

29 Ibid., fol. 14r: 'Mais tout cela reste Inconnu/Et sans culture faute d'ouvriers/Et cela pendant qu'en latin/Et en grec on rebat toujours/Les memes choses. Et que l'on fait/Tous les jours de nouvelles additions/De livres immenses, qui ne servent presque de Rien. Et que/L'on gaste souvent plustost qu'on ne/Les corrige.'

30 Ibid., fol. 17v: 'Il n'y en a pas une seule qui puisse passer.'



absence of any auxiliary materials for many Oriental languages. For example, Fourmont observed, 'M. d'Herbelot said many things on the Arabs, Persians, and the Turks. But there is still much more to be said; and his book is worthless with regard to the other Oriental nations.'<sup>31</sup> Likewise, he criticized the trilingual (Arabic, Persian and Turkish) approach of Franz Meninski because 'although these three languages have a great number of words in common on account of the religion shared by these three peoples, they are nevertheless entirely disparate in terms of grammar'.<sup>32</sup>

The *mémoire* concludes with policy proposals that might help improve Oriental studies. Fourmont counts not just on the abbé Bignon, but also on the regent, the Duke of Orleans, 'the most learned Prince and the greatest lover of letters that the French monarchy has yet seen'.<sup>33</sup> The proposals concern the books already present in the Royal Library, 'the manner of making them useful, which is the goal of the king in acquiring them', and 'the means of spreading knowledge, both of these books and of the languages in which they are written'.<sup>34</sup> Some of his suggestions concerned a better management of the catalogue of Oriental books, then in progress (the first volume would appear in print in 1739).<sup>35</sup> Fourmont explained the ultimate goal of his reforms:

If the learned do not utilize these manuscripts, then what was the purpose of acquiring them? They will never be translated, they will remain unknown, they will never be cited. And yet they form the most expensive as well as the most precious part of the Royal Library. ... It is not very reasonable to dispatch people to take them from the Orient if we do not make any use of them, nor to leave to the Germans and the English the glory of printing editions of them, when they cost the king immense sums which he spent in order to make his kingdom more illustrious.<sup>36</sup>

31 Ibid., fol. 29v: 'Mr. D'Herbelot a dit beaucoup de choses sur les Arabes les Persans et les Turcs. Mais il y en a encore autant a dire et son livre n'est rien a l'égard des autres nations orientales.'

32 Ibid., fols. 25r-v: 'quoyque ces 3 Langues ayent un fort grand nombre de mots communs a cause de la Religion commune aux 3 peuples; cependant elles sont tout a fait disparates pour la Grammaire.'

33 Ibid., fol. 31v.

34 Ibid., fols. 32v-33r: '1. sur les livres orientaux de la Bibliothèque Royale, / 2. sur la maniere de les rendre utiles ce qui est le le But du Roy en les achetant. / 3. sur le moyen de perpetuer la connoissance, soit de ces livres soit des langues dans lesquelles ils sont écrits.'

35 Ibid., fol. 33v.

36 Ibid., fol. 34v: 'si les savans ne se servent point de ces MSs. A quoy bon les avoir achetez; il ne seront jamais traduits, ils demeurerent inconnus, on ne les citera jamais, c'est pourtant la partie de la Bibliotheque du Roy la plus chere et veritablement la plus pretieuse. [C]e

In other words, Fourmont's concern is no longer, as it was for his seventeenth-century predecessors, the acquisition of an adequate number of Oriental books. The problem at this later moment consists in the management and exploitation of the many volumes now held in Paris.<sup>37</sup>

Fourmont's proposals do not just deal with the library. He envisions the Collège Royal, too, as a key instrument for sustaining Oriental studies in Paris. He recommends increasing the number of its chairs of Oriental languages, proposing at least two new additions, one for Coptic and Ethiopic, and the other for Chinese and the Indian languages. Arabic professors should be granted the permission to teach Persian and Turkish as well.<sup>38</sup> Throughout the *mémoire*, Fourmont's enthusiasm for his subject shines forth. For instance, of Chinese characters, he writes, 'one barely knew here [in Paris] what the characters of this language looked like, which nevertheless are one of the most beautiful things that man has ever invented'.<sup>39</sup>

Yet Fourmont's position as the first French Sinologist is an ambiguous one. He spent much of his life attempting to produce both a grammar and a dictionary of Chinese, but he also tilted at scholarly windmills in the conviction that Chinese characters could be reduced to a system of 214 signs. He never could translate Chinese texts. In 1825, the French Sinologist Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat revealed that Fourmont's *Grammatica sinica* plagiarized the work of a Spanish Franciscan missionary.<sup>40</sup> Fourmont's reputation has not recovered. Yet, as is known, the history of scholarship has sometimes advanced thanks to the work of frauds and forgers, so this episode—and Fourmont's failures more broadly—should not disqualify him from consideration in our intellectual histories of the era.<sup>41</sup>

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n'est pas une chose fort raisonnable, d'envoyer des gens apres pour les oster a l'Orient si nous n'en faisons ny aucun usage, ou si après qu'ils ont couté au Roy des sommes immenses qu'il a données en vue d'illustrer son Royaume, nous laissons aux Allemans et aux Anglois la gloire d'en faire des editions.'

37 This seems to have been a Europe-wide predicament in the eighteenth century: Simon Ockley and, later, Johann Jacob Reiske recorded similar complaints about the use of the manuscripts held in Oxford and Leiden respectively. See Bevilacqua, *Republic of Arabic Letters*, pp. 42–3.

38 BnF NAF 8973, fol. 37v: 'Je crois donc qu'il seroit necessair d'establir encore au College Royal au moins deux chaires. Une pour le Cophte et l'Aethiopien, Une autre pour le Chinois et les langues Indiennes & c. Et en meme tems que l'on pourroit donner permission aux professeurs arabes d'enseigner alterativement l'un l'arabe et les principes du turc, l'autre l'arabe et les principes du Persan.'

39 Ibid., fol. 36r: 'A peine savoit on icy comment estoient faits les characters de cette langue, qui sont neanmoins une des belles choses que l'homme ait jamais inventés.'

40 Discussed in App, *Birth of Orientalism*, p. 193.

41 A. Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton, 1990).

The posters (*affiches*) announcing the lecture series of the Collège Royal reveal what Fourmont taught throughout his thirty years there, from 1715 to his death at the end of 1745 (Fig. 13.1).<sup>42</sup> The brief texts advertised pedagogical emphases (for instance, in the autumn of 1715, he offered an introduction to Arabic geared towards those who already knew Hebrew), but they also served to announce the books on which Fourmont would lecture.<sup>43</sup> They reveal a singular dedication to one work, Ibn ‘Arabshāh’s history of Tamerlane, which he taught in 43 out of 61 semesters. After initial experiments with al-Makīn’s so-called *Historia Saracenica* (autumn 1715) and Ibn Ṭufayl’s *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* (spring 1716), starting in autumn 1716 Fourmont settled into a curriculum that combined the basic grammar of Arabic with sections of Ibn ‘Arabshāh. From 1720 onwards, he added to this the Arabic-language Psalms in the edition by Gabriel Sionita and François Savary de Brèves, which he ended up teaching 30 times. The sole other work he taught with any frequency, especially after 1734, was Erpenius’s edition of the Arabic New Testament, which he employed 12 times in all. The only other books the posters mention are Abū ‘l-Faraj in Edward Pococke’s edition (six times) and Thomas Erpenius’s edition of the fables of Luqmān (three times). (Apart from the Arabic Psalms, Fourmont did not lecture on Arabic poetry, even though many excerpts were available in print.)

Fourmont’s focus on Ibn ‘Arabshāh did not lie at the cutting edge of Arabic scholarship, since Jacobus Golius published the work in Leiden, with a facing Latin version, in 1636.<sup>44</sup> But this was not the point; Fourmont restricted himself to the corpus of printed Arabic texts presumably because these would have been possible for his students to find (their European editors had indeed intended these printed Arabic editions as teaching materials). His choice of Ibn ‘Arabshāh would seem to reveal a preference for medieval history, renewing the earlier commitment of his predecessors d’Herbelot and Renaudot, who had sought to capture the history of central Asia through Arabic, as well as

42 Collège de France (CdF), Archives, 4 AFF 35 through 4 AFF 95 (autumn 1715 to autumn 1745). The posters have been digitized and are available on the CdF website: [https://salamandre.college-de-france.fr/ead.html?id=FR075CDF\\_00AFF0004&c=FR075CDF\\_00AFF0004\\_de-11](https://salamandre.college-de-france.fr/ead.html?id=FR075CDF_00AFF0004&c=FR075CDF_00AFF0004_de-11) For more context on the teaching of Arabic at the Collège Royal around this time, see P. Ageron and M. Jaouhari, ‘Le programme pédagogique d’un arabisant du Collège royal, François Pétiſ de La Croix (1653-1713)’, *Arabica*, 61 (2014), 396–453.

43 CdF Archives, 4 AFF 35 (autumn 1715): ‘Stephanus Fourmont ... tradet institutiones Linguae Arabicae novas, breves, et ad eorum qui Hebraica didicerint, usum accommodatas.’ See, e.g., also CdF Archives, 4 AFF 38 (spring 1717): ‘Stephanus Fourmont ... quem discipulorum gratiā punctis instruxit; nunc rationem legendae sine punctis Arabicae ... tradet.’

44 Jacobus Golius, *Ahmedis Arabsiadæ vitæ et rerum gestarum Timuri, qui vulgo Tamerlanes dicitur, Historia* (Leiden, 1636).

DEO VOLENTE

# REGIUM FRANCIAE COLLEGIUM;

QUOD CONQUISITIS UNDIQUE VIRIS DOCTRINAE LAUDE FLORENTIBUS:  
velut amplum omnis sapientiae promptuarium FRANCISCUS I. Litterarum patris instituit, ceteri deinceps Reges  
nunquam intermissa liberalitate fovenerunt, post Feras Autumnales solita munia repetet hoc ordine.

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**LECTORES ET PROFESSORES REGII  
SACRARUM HEBRAICARUMQUE LITERARUM.**

**J**OANNES BAPTISTA SARASIN, Doctor Parisiensis, Professor Regius, traditâ Linguae Hebraicae Grammaticâ, librum Exodi exponere incipiet die Martis  
xix. Novembris, horâ quartâ.

**J**ACOBUS PIRSONNAT, Sacrae Facultatis Parisiensis Doctor Theologus, praedictis, pro more, Hebraicae Linguae institutionibus, minores Prophetas  
interpretabitur, incipietur à Jonâ, ut pote facilliori die Lunae xviii. Novembris, horâ ~~septima~~ decimâ.

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**GRAECARUM LITERARUM.**

**J**OANNES BOVIN, Custos Bibliothecae Regiae, ac Regie numismatum & inscriptionum Academiae socius, Homeri selecta interpretabitur, ac praefertim,  
quae cum Virgilianis contulit Julius Scaliger Poëticae Lib VI Incipiet die Lunae xviii. Novembris horâ post meridiem tertiâ.

**G**UILLELMUS MASSIEU, Gallicae ac Regiae Inscriptionum & Numismatum Academiae socius, dum visus recuperationem expectat magis quam sperat,  
G Anaëctosis, Sappho, Moschi, ac Bionis Poëmatia interpretabitur. Incipiet die Lunae xviii. Novembris horâ nonâ matutinâ.

---

**SCIENTIARUM MATHEMATICARUM.**

**P**HILIPPUS DE LA HIRE, Mathematicus Professor & Professorum Regionum Decanus, nec-non Regiae Scientiarum Academiae socius, quae radii luminis  
refracti in transfusa à medio in medium Phasica proprietateque expendit, Dioptricam aggredietur. Incipiet die Lunae xviii. Novembris horâ decimâ.

**J**OSEPHUS SAVYRUS, Philippo V. Hispaniarum Regi, & Serenissimis Franciae Principibus ad Mathematicas disciplinas instituendis antea praepositus,  
nunc examinandi iis qui ad municiendas urbes aspirant, & à Regiâ scientiarum Academiâ, Acousticâ parte Physicâ jam explicatâ, Mathematicam &  
eiusdem scientiae Phænomena accuratius aggredietur die Jovis xxi. Novembris, horâ undecimâ.

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**GRAECAE ET LATINAE PHILOSOPHIAE.**

**P**ETRUS VARIGNON, à Regiâ Scientiarum Academiae, Gallicanâ, Anglicanâ, & Borussia, Elementa Philosophiae Mechanicae docebit, horâ tertiâ  
post meridiem incipiet die Lunae xviii. Novembris.

**M**ICHAEL MORUS, Academiae Parisiensis Rector Antiquus, dissertet de meteoris & mixtis inanibus. Incipiet die Martis xix. Novembris, horâ post  
meridiem primâ.

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**LATINAE ELOQUENTIAE.**

**J**OANNES BAPTISTA COUTURE, Universitatis Parisiensis Rector antiquus, Lectorum Regionum ~~Primum~~, Regiae Inscriptionum & Numismatum Academiae  
socius, Eloquentiae precepta repetet ex ipsâ ingenii humani naturâ, exempla verò ex M. T. Ciceronis Oratione pro Rege Dejotaro. Incipiet die Martis  
xix. Novembris horâ undecimâ.

**C**AROLUS ROLLIN, antiquus Academiae Parisiensis Rector, necnon Regiae Inscriptionum & numismatum Academiae socius, Libros 7. 8. & 9. Instituti-  
onum Oratoriarum M. Fabii Quintilianii suis praeferegre incipiet die Martis xix. Novembris horâ primâ.

---

**MEDICINAE, CHIRURGIAE, PHARMACIAE, ET BOTANICES.**

**G**ERMANUS PEARX, Doctor Medicus Parisiensis, Hippocratis Aphorismos ad morborum notitiam & curationem magis utiles seliget & interpretabitur.  
Incipiet die Martis xix. Novembris horâ sequi-secundâ pomeridianâ.

**N**ICOLAUS ANDRY Conularius Regis, Doctor Medicus Parisiensis, necnon Regius librorum Censor, primum Aphorismorum Hippocratis Librum com-  
mentabitur. Incipiet die xviii. Novembris, horâ nonâ.

**S**TEPHANUS FRANCISQUS GOSSEY, Doctor Medicus Parisiensis, Regiae scientiarum Academiae, regique societatis Londinensis socius, necnon in  
Sacro Regio utriusque Pharmaciae Professor, medicamentorum, quae vegetabile Regnum suppeditat, historiam, delictum, virtutes, & usum edocere  
perget, incipiet die Lunae xviii. Novembris, horâ decimâ.

**P**ETRUS JOANES BURETE, Regis Conularius, Doctor Medicus Parisiensis, à Regiâ Inscriptionum ac Numismatum Academia, necnon Regius Li-  
brorum Censor, Hippocratis libros de Morbis *Materia* explicare perget. Incipiet die Lunae xviii. Novembris, horâ post meridiem secundâ.

---

**LINGVAE ARABICAE.**

**J**OANNES-BAPTISTA DESHERRES, Linguarum Orientalium Interpres Regius, praemisit Arabicae Linguae elementis, Regis Boucquoumou Effiadi res  
gestas explicare incipiet die Martis xix. horâ octavâ.

**S**TEPHANUS FOURMONT, Regiae Inscriptionum, atque Numismatum Academiae socius, tradet institutiones Linguae Arabicae novas, breves, & ad  
eorum qui Hebraica didicerunt, usum accommodatas, postea Saracenicam Georgii Elmacini Historiam aggressurus incipiet die Lunae xviii. No-  
vembris horâ tertiâ

---

**JURIS CANONICI.**

**P**ETRUS DE MERRE dicit de reparandis ac reficiendis Ecclesiis secundum leges & instituta Juris sacri Gallicani. Incipiet die Lunae xviii. Novembris, horâ  
post meridiem secundâ.

**C**LAUDIVS CAROLVS CAFON, in Senatu Parisiensis Patronus, Regi à Consiliis in Collegio Regio Juris Canonici Professor, & Librorum Regius Censor,  
explicaturus titulum Concordatorum de Regia ad Praelaturas potestate, incipiet die Lunae xviii. Novembris, horâ tertiâ.

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**LINGVAE SYRIACAE.**

**N**ICOLAUS HENRIOT, Consularissime Jurium Facultatis Parisiensis Doctor Aggregatus, in Senatu Patronus, & Regiae Inscriptionum & Numismatum  
Academiae socius, praemisit brevibus Linguae Syriacae institutionibus, Syriacam Aetnam Apostolorum versionem interpretabitur. Incipiet die Martis  
xix. Novembris, horâ octavâ matutinâ.

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Anno Domini M. DCC. XV.

## IN REGIIS FRANCIAE AUDITORIIS.

FIGURE 13.1 The first poster of the Collège Royal that advertises one of Fourmont's courses of lectures is from the autumn of 1715. He continued to lecture on Arabic topics until the year of his death, 1745, and the full run of posters reveals the variety of topics on which he chose to teach. Paris, Collège de France, Archives, 4-AFF 35.

Persian, sources.<sup>45</sup> Overall, however, one gets the impression that Fourmont, whose research focused on Chinese, not Arabic, returned to the same tried-and-true teaching materials year after year. Indeed, the *affiches* tend to foreground not the content of the works to be studied but rather Fourmont's Arabic pedagogy, which emphasized reading Arabic both with and without the vocalization marks (*ḥarakāt*), and which, he occasionally claimed, improved on all published European grammars of the language.<sup>46</sup>

Before Fourmont could undertake to develop this curriculum, however, he had to deliver his inaugural lecture. The tradition of the inaugural Arabic lecture went back over a century by 1715, to the foundation of chairs of Arabic at European institutions of higher learning in the first half of the seventeenth century. In fact, the very first such chair was created at the Collège Royal, to which Guillaume Postel was appointed in 1538, only eight years after its founding. Paris was followed by Heidelberg, which appointed Jakob Christmann in 1608; but neither Postel nor Christmann, though they published pedagogical materials for Arabic study, printed an inaugural lecture.<sup>47</sup> It seems to have been the Dutch scholar Thomas Erpenius at Leiden who gave the genre prominence with his publication not just of his first Arabic oration, but also of a second one, and a Hebrew one besides.<sup>48</sup> In turn, such lectures emulated the inaugural Hebrew lecture, a type of address which had been given since the early sixteenth century and behind which lay the inaugural lectures of humanists of the Quattrocento like Angelo Poliziano and Lorenzo Valla.<sup>49</sup>

45 On d'Herbelot and Renaudot, see Bevilacqua, *Republic of Arabic Letters*, chs. 4 and 5.

46 E.g., CdF Archives, 4 AFF 53 (autumn 1728): 'Stephanus Fourmont ... exposita per paucos dies Arabicarum Institutionum a se compositorum facilitate, ea quam non habuerint Postelli, Raymundi, Martelloti, Guadagnoli, Erpennii, Vasmuthi, Castelli, virorum alioqui in hac Litteratura Heroum, Grammaticae; varia Psalmorum, Novi Testamenti, Tamerlanicae Historiae loca ... leget.'

47 G.J. Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom and Learning. The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 26–7 and 37–8.

48 Besides the lectures of Erpenius, discussed below, a number of others had appeared in print, including: Matthias Pasor, *Oratio pro linguae Arabicae professione, publice ad academicos habita in schola theologica Universitatis Oxoniensis xxv Octob. 1626* (Oxford, 1627); Thomas Greaves (Oxford, 1637); Edmund Castell (Cambridge, 1666). Pococke's inaugural lecture was held on 10 August 1636, but is now lost, though a short excerpt appeared in his *Carmen Tograi* (Oxford, 1661); see Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, pp. 126 and 213–14.

49 For an early Hebrew oration, see Robert Wakefield, *On the Three Languages* [1524], ed. G. Lloyd Jones (Binghamton, 1989). P. Godman, *From Poliziano to Machiavelli: Florentine Humanism in the High Renaissance* (Princeton, 1998), pp. 39–40. For Valla's *Oratio habita in principio sui studii*, see *Orazione per l'inaugurazione dell'anno accademico, 1455-1456: Lorenzo Valla. Atti di un seminario di filologia umanistica*, ed. S. Rizzo (Rome, 1994).

Erpenius's lecture on Hebrew, delivered in 1620, emphasized its worthiness (*dignitas*) and utility (*utilitas*).<sup>50</sup> Hebrew was ancient, sacred and beautiful, and therefore worthy; it was relevant to the study of history, of the Old Testament and, in fact, of the Bible as a whole, and therefore useful.<sup>51</sup> When Erpenius received the chair of Arabic at Leiden, he likewise lectured on the *dignitas* and *utilitas* of that language. Arabic's *utilitas* depended upon four features: its wide diffusion, its intellectual traditions, its potential to help one understand Hebrew and, finally, its potential to help with the conversion of Muslims. These were not novel arguments by the time Erpenius made them. Indeed, both the sincerity of his commitment to each of these four arguments, and the way that he and his listeners may have ranked them, have been debated.<sup>52</sup> As Joanna Weinberg and Arnoud Vrolijk write elsewhere in this volume, 'the extant publications serve as further confirmation that his missionary zeal, as expressed in his first Arabic oration, was simply a rhetorical device intended to serve the expectations of his academic audience.'<sup>53</sup> The point, nevertheless, is that Erpenius saw the need to make these arguments, however insincerely.

Erpenius's arguments serve as a telling contrast to Fourmont's. Despite the undoubted analogies between them—an evocation of the enmity between Christians and Muslims, of the Christian desire to bring about conversions and of the massive geographical extent occupied by Muslims—Fourmont configures these arguments differently, in order to promote the literary and intellectual benefits of Arabic over both the practical and the theological ones. Fourmont's lecture makes a good case for Arabic in the age of the *querelle d'Homère*, when French literary culture was renegotiating what it owed to the Greek and Roman classics, as well as attempting to understand the literatures of the rest of the world.

The two themes that structure Fourmont's oration are the '*jocunditas*' (or *iucunditas*, that is, delightfulness, pleasantness) and the *utilitas* of the Arabic language—and not its *dignitas*. The term *iucunditas* appears in Quintilian's

50 On Erpenius, see, among others, Toomer, *Eastern Wisdom*, pp. 43–7; A. Vrolijk, 'The Prince of Arabists and His Many Errors: Thomas Erpenius's Image of Joseph Scaliger and the Edition of the *Proverbia Arabica* (1614)', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 73 (2010), 297–325; A. Hamilton, 'The Qur'an as Chrestomathy in Early Modern Europe', in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic*, ed. J. Loop et al. (Leiden, 2017), pp. 213–29; A. Vrolijk and J. Weinberg, 'Thomas Erpenius: Oriental Scholarship and the Art of Persuasion', in this volume.

51 P. van den Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship, and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden, 1989), pp. 57–9.

52 Hamilton, 'Arabic Studies in the Netherlands', p. cii; see also Vrolijk and Weinberg, 'Erpenius and the Art of Persuasion'.

53 Vrolijk and Weinberg, 'Erpenius and the Art of Persuasion', p. 40.

*Institutio oratoria* as a description of Cicero's style: 'Who has ever had greater charm?' ('Qui unquam tanta iucunditas adfuit?').<sup>54</sup> It is in this sense of literary charm that Fourmont's usage should be taken. The choice to argue for Arabic on the basis of the pleasure it affords is not a minor reconfiguration of the scale of the language's value. In the move from *dignitas* to *iucunditas*, Fourmont re-frames the importance of Arabic, shifting it from religion to belles-lettres. Once again, this argument does not emerge *ex nihilo*; in Erpenius's 1613 lecture one of the recommendations of Arabic is its *elegantia*.<sup>55</sup>

Fourmont's treatment of *iucunditas* begins by celebrating the pleasure (*voluptas*) of learning languages in general, which is a virtuous pleasure since it sharpens the intellect.<sup>56</sup> Fourmont reassures his listeners that he is not biased in favour of Arabic—great pleasure can be derived from other languages as well. He concedes the 'infinite majesty' of Virgil, the 'most exquisite beauty' of Horace, the 'charm' of Ovid, the 'gravity' of Tacitus and 'all the talents' of Cicero.<sup>57</sup> He praises the Greeks in the same vein. He concludes that 'only a dull and narrow mind would criticize those things ... that great men have declared admirable and full of praise'.<sup>58</sup> Yet, he immediately adds, 'if, I say, you take a step towards the Arabic language, how tiny, how meagre will seem all those things about which we have now been boasting'.<sup>59</sup> Hebrew, he suggests, should be left aside as a divine language, and therefore greater than any human one.<sup>60</sup> Arabic, however, he argues, surpasses Greek and Latin:

I deny that any other language so rich in words, so overflowing with eloquence, so varied in all kinds of knowledge, so praiseworthy in its

54 Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, x.i.110.

55 Thomas Erpenius, *Oratio linguae Arabicae praestantia et dignitate* (Leiden, 1613), sig. B2r.

56 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 3v: 'quae magnitudinem intellectus etiam atque etiam augere'. See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 56r.

57 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 3v: 'scimus et nos infinitam esse Virgilio majestatem; venustatem Horatii exquisitissimam, floridissimum Ovidii leporem, persaepe gravitatem in Tacito, non semel in Salustio [sic] nitorem, plerumque elegantiam in Caesare: quotidie in Cicerone facultates paene omnes, certe incredibile re divinum quoddam genus orationis admirati sumus.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 56r.

58 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 4r: 'levis autem angustique istud animi sit, ea vituperare in quibus pernoscendis aetatem omnem existimaris collocandam, ea despiciere quae saeculorum omnium memoria, quae maximi viri plena laudum suspiciendaque praedicarint'. See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 56v.

59 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 4r: 'si ad Arabica inquam, feceritis gradum: quam paucula, quam exigua sunt ea quae nunc ostentabamus omnia'. See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 56v.

60 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 4r: 'nam hebraica, cum divina tota sint, nefas ullis mortalium opusculis comparare'. See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 56v.

writings has ever existed in any place, or could ever exist, that would not trail far behind the Arabic language.<sup>61</sup>

This might seem like generic rhetorical overreach. But it becomes intelligible when we consider its historical context, what we might call the ‘hyper-Arabism’ of the seventeenth century, the widespread conviction that Arabic was a uniquely ancient and uniquely important language. What is most interesting about Arabic’s long career in early modern Europe is the variety of claims made on its behalf. Fourmont’s argument signals that in his time and place its importance was not tied to its relationship to Hebrew, as it had been for many of his predecessors, especially Protestant ones, but to the secular literature that it unlocked. Coming shortly after his predecessor Antoine Galland had produced the first European translation of the *Thousand and One Nights*, this is not, of course, an altogether aberrant view.<sup>62</sup>

Three different circumstances enrich the development of literatures, Fourmont continues, by allowing them to increase in both vocabulary and knowledge. All three were abundantly present among the Arabs. First was ‘the leisure [*otium*] one might enjoy during a lasting peace, away from the turmoil of warfare’; second, ‘sovereignty with respect to other nations, continually exerted over many years’; and, finally, ‘concern for the foundation of academies.’<sup>63</sup> With the exception of the Greeks and Romans, he added, no other people in human history could boast these favourable circumstances to the same extent.

On the first count, that of a lasting tranquillity, one should not imagine, Fourmont continues, that the ancient Arabs had been ‘barbarous or wild men, or shepherds ignorant of all things’, like modern (indigenous) ‘Americans’ or ‘the Romans before Aeneas.’<sup>64</sup> Instead, the ancient Arabs had ‘madly loved and cultivated languages’, and ‘all of their vanity and pride and ferocity was

61 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 4r–v: ‘nego ullam aliam Linguam tam copiosam verbis, tam oratione redundantem, tam variam omni genere cognitionum, tot scriptis commendabilem exitisse usquam aut extare umquam posse, quin ab arabicâ distet adhuc longissimé.’ See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 57r.

62 Antoine Galland, *Les Mille et une nuit*, 12 vols. (Paris, 1704–1717).

63 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 4v: ‘Tria sunt imprimis, quae litteras, aut nondum natas educere nihilo; aut in vitâ, ut ita dicam, conservare, aut jam inter mortuas revocare ad lucem possint; eademque tria linguas, ac sermones novis et verbis adaequare consueverunt, et scientiis locupletare. Scilicet gratum illud otium, quo in pace diuturna perfrui-mur, securi tumultorum bellicorum, longa et per multos annos atque in varias nationes perpetua dominatio, sollicitudo cura-que de Academiis erigundis.’ BnF NAF 8943, f. 57r.

64 BnF NAF 8972, fols. 4v–5r: ‘Neque enim hic fingere est animo, Barbaros quosdam ferosque Homines, pastoresque omnium verum ignaros, uti vicitant Americani plerique: uti Romani ante Aeneae.’ See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 57v.



invested in composing the most elegant orations and publishing fully polished poems of every kind.<sup>65</sup> If the Romans fought gladiatorial battles, and the Greeks indulged in Olympic races, 'only the tribes of Arabs considered that decisions should be made not by means of war, but of literature; not with physical force, but with sharpness of wit; not with swiftness of foot, but with excellence of intellect.'<sup>66</sup> This emphasis on literary contests over physical ones unambiguously revealed the Arabs' superiority.

Second, as for sovereignty with respect to other nations, Muslims had conquered and held an empire that 'no nation' could rival. Syria, Egypt, Persia, Greece, Thrace (modern Bulgaria), Sicily, Sardinia, Spain, Africa, 'all had to bend before the arms of the Arabs, all had to obey the laws of the Saracens.'<sup>67</sup> Fourmont does not probe why God had permitted that 'one of the most beautiful parts of the Earth and regions which had been dedicated to him by the nearly divine ardour of Christian piety had been covered by such a thick cloud of darkness, so severely oppressed and subjected to such lengthy slavery.'<sup>68</sup> This is an entirely traditional lamentation of Muslim expansion, but its location in the oration is striking. It does not have its own place in the argument but is merely prompted by Fourmont's discussion of the benefits of empire for literary output. After bemoaning that the French had not helped to rout the Muslims from medieval Iberia, nor converted them to Christianity, he rapidly passes to the 'immense advantage' of such a lengthy and expansive Muslim domination: 'Hence poems of all kinds, hence speeches, hence stories in great number, hence innumerable philosophical disquisitions, with which many na-

65 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 5r: 'litteras a Priscis illis arabibus deperdite amatas cultasque: ipsorum in eo gloriationem, in eo superbiam, in eo furorem situm omnem esse ut orationes conscriberent elegantissimas, ut poemata omni arte, limâ omni expolita pervulgarent.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 57v.

66 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 5r: 'Romani etiam florentissimâ republicâ, nihil nisi pugnas gladiatorias exposcunt: sicariorum quorundam caede ac trucidatione potius quam ludis oblectantur. Graeci, etiam tum, cum ipsis Philosophae divina lux affulsit, nihil luctâ istâ olympicâ dignius, nihil cursu magius, nihil pugilatu gloriosius vident: Tribus Arabum solae, non bello, sed litteratura; non viribus corporis, sed ingenii acumine; non pedum celeritate, sed praestantia intellectus decernandum putant.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fols. 57v–58r.

67 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 5v: 'Omnes armis Arabum, omnes Saracenorum legibus paruerunt.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 58r.

68 BnF NAF 8972, fols. 5v–6r: 'hic profecto obtumescendum nobis, aut cum Paulo exclamandum, *O altitudo Divitiarum Sapientiae ac Scientiae Dei*, qui partem orbis pulcherrimam, qui Regiones olim sibi divino quodam Christianae pietatis ardore consecratas, tam densâ tenebrarum caligine obduci permiserit, tam gravi opprimi, tamque diuturnâ servitute!' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 58v. The reference is to Romans 11:33: 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!'

tions, even very distant from each other, agreed, by a fierce effort of the mind, to render illustrious the one and same Arabic language.<sup>69</sup> This had inspired both kings and subjects with ‘an inexhaustible desire to philosophize and to write, such as had been never seen before.’<sup>70</sup> In sum, the main emphasis here is not on Christian-Muslim enmity, which is incidentally remarked upon, but rather on the advantages of the Muslim empire for philosophy and letters.

Was all this literature not produced in the name of an erroneous religion? Fourmont assuages this concern: ‘The difference of those religions ought never to prevent scholars from studying Saracen writings, nor learned men from drawing pleasure from them.’<sup>71</sup> Putting the point more bluntly, he writes, if that was a problem,

why are Ciceros in our hands every day? Away from here, away with the Virgils, the Horaces, for they are much more impious; away with all the Greeks, for none of them had any knowledge of God, nor any information in matters of religion.<sup>72</sup>

Fourmont’s *a fortiori* argument is perhaps the most remarkable in his whole oration. The point is that if Muslim writings are off bounds, so too are the writings of the good pagans of classical antiquity. Fourmont implies that monotheist Muslims had at least some inkling of true religion, whereas pagans did not. The notion that the truth could be reached by degrees turned on its head traditional ideas about whether paganism (never having known true religion) or heresy (persisting in error when one has the opportunity to know the truth) was worse. For Thomas Aquinas and for many others in the Western Christian tradition, heresy was much more worrying:

69 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 6v: ‘Caeterum, Auditores, ex hac eadem tam longa atque in tot tamque Varias gentes dominatione, secutum est id quod dicebamus, emolumentum; hinc Poemata omnis generis, hinc Orationes, hinc historiae sexcentae, hinc Philosophiae disquisitiones innumerae, cum ad unam eandemque linguam Arabicam illustrandam, nationes complures et a se invicem remotissima pertinaci animorum contentione conspirarent.’ See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 59r.

70 BnF NAF 8972, fols. 6v–7r: ‘Hinc et in singulis et inter ipsos Reges inexhausta quaedam, et qualis antea nusquam visa Philosophandi scribendique auditas.’ See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 59r.

71 BnF NAF 9872, fol. 7r: ‘ista hac Religionum distantia ... quin Saracenorum Scripta docti versent, quin a libris Arabum eam quae inest voluptatem capiant eruditi, impedimento esse nullo unquam debat.’ See also BnF NAF 8943 fol. 59r.

72 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 7r: ‘cur quotidie in manibus nostris Cicerones? Procul hinc, procul Virgilii, Nasones, Horatii, quod impii multo magis: procul Graeci omnes quod inter ipsos nulli fere ullam dei cognitionem, ullam religionis informationem habuerint.’ See also BnF NAF 8943 fol. 59r.

He who denies the faith after accepting it sins more grievously than he who denies it without ever having accepted it, even as he who fails to keep a promise sins more than he who had never made one. ... the unbelief of heretics is the very worst.<sup>73</sup>

The French Oratorian Richard Simon, who had died three years earlier, in 1712, had already reassessed the relative merits of good pagans and good Muslims as regards the knowledge of the true God:

I have claimed that their morality is even more pure than that of the pagan philosophers, for they have also drawn a good part of it from the books of the Jews and the Christians. One finds nothing in the writings of the most learned pagans that might be compared with what the Arab writers say about the unity of God, about his perfections, about the worship which is his due and about the charity that one must cultivate towards one's neighbour.<sup>74</sup>

Fourmont followed in the wake of this reconfiguration and extended it to the domain of literature.

Fourmont's third argument, the foundation of academies, was easily made. He announces that he will not deign to refute the notion that the Arabs failed to cultivate the sciences. Using his favourite rhetorical device, *praeteritio* (mentioning something by saying that it will not be mentioned), he evokes Damascus, Aleppo, Spain, Samarkand, Constantinople, Morocco, etc., all places replete with institutions of learning and libraries.<sup>75</sup> In this respect, he echoes Erpenius's own celebration, in 1613, of the flourishing academies of the cities of North Africa, Egypt and elsewhere.<sup>76</sup> Likewise, Fourmont insists, regions such as Greece or Africa, which had once produced the Church Fathers, had not

73 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 2:2:10.6.

74 Richard Simon, *Lettres choisies*, 3 vols. (Rotterdam, 1705), 3: 229: 'J'ai prétendu que leur morale est encore plus pure que celle des Philosophes payens, parce qu'ils en ont aussi puisé une bonne partie dans les Livres des Juifs & des Chrétiens. On ne trouve rien dans les ouvrages des plus savants païens qui puisse être comparé avec ce que les écrivains arabes disent de l'unité de Dieu, de ses perfections, du culte qu'on doit lui rendre, et de la charité qu'on doit avoir pour son prochain.'

75 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 7v: 'Adiitne Damascus, Aleppam, Hispanum, Samarcandam. Adiit Prusiam, Sivasiam, Constantinopolim, adiit Fezzam, Marokum, innumerasque alias urbes, at nobilissimas incolarum suorum ingenio ac perspicuitate, et amplitudine Bibliothecarum, doctorumque collegiis frequentissimas non adiit.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fols. 59v–60r.

76 Erpenius, *Oratio*, sig. D2r–v.

changed after the Arab conquest. People's nature had not changed: 'Religion is born to change people's customs, not their character.'<sup>77</sup> This sentiment is reminiscent of Edward Pococke's point about the capability of the Arabs for science in his *Specimen historiae Arabum*: 'No one who considers the level at which they thereafter successfully cultivated these studies would allow himself to be persuaded of (their lack of fitness for scientific pursuits).'<sup>78</sup>

When Fourmont comes to the second part of his argument, on the *utilitas* of Arabic, he explains that he means utility not in a vulgar sense, but an elevated one: Arabic is useful to philosophy. It serves to advance the three purposes and meanings of life: personal happiness, the wellbeing of the state and religion.<sup>79</sup> The progress of philosophy and the perfection of the mind, he continues, proceed either through travel, and comparing customs of different peoples, or else through reading the works of illustrious authors.<sup>80</sup> This echoes Descartes's statement in the *Discourse on the Method* (1637) that travel could accomplish as much as reading: 'it is almost the same thing to converse with people from other centuries [i.e., to read] as it is to travel.'<sup>81</sup> Descartes's further point was that travel was a more agreeable way of learning the customs of different peoples. Fourmont argues that, whatever path to cosmopolitanism one chose, Arabic could serve both routes: 'will not the Arabic language guarantee a certain course to see cities, get to know customs and explore the talents of foreign nations?'<sup>82</sup> It could take one across the Ottoman Empire to Persia, Central and South Asia, the lands of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, the source of the Nile and the garden of the Hesperides. 'Could anything be proposed or judged more useful than this language, which leads me far and wide across Europe, Africa and Asia, a fellow citizen of the whole world and a barbarian to no mortal?'<sup>83</sup>

77 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 8r: 'Religio mores non ingenia, nata est commutare.' BnF NAF 8943, fol. 60r.

78 Edward Pococke, *Specimen historiae Arabum* (Oxford, 1650), p. 165 ('Notae'): 'quis hoc sibi persuaderi patiat qui, quo postea successu ea coluerint, perpenderit?'

79 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 8v. BnF NAF 8943, fol. 60v.

80 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 9v. BnF NAF 8943, fol. 61r

81 René Descartes, 'Discours de la méthode' in id., *Oeuvres philosophiques ...*, ed. F. Alquié, 3 vols. (Paris, 1963), 1: 573: 'c'est quasi le même de converser avec ceux des autres siècles, que de voyager'.

82 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 9v: 'Viam ingressis nonne iter est Arabic lingua praestitura tutissimum Urbes videre, consuetudines pernoscere, ingenia explorare nationum externarum gestis?' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 61r.

83 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 10r: 'Utilius autem hâc illâ linguâ Indicari aut Iudicari quidquam potest, quae me per Europam, per Asiam per Africam longe lateque circumducat, orbis adeo universi concivem, Barbarum mortalium nemini?' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 61v.

This was Erpenius's century-old argument about Arabic's wide diffusion, here in service of the moral formation of the person. Yet, *pace* Descartes, and true to his humanist formation, Fourmont much preferred staying at home and reading to the prospect of certainly uncomfortable and possibly dangerous travel.<sup>84</sup> Arabic could serve the scholar in his study: 'Here, too, Arabic literature will help you, as it supplies many more things, and much greater ones, than Latin literature and Greek.'<sup>85</sup> Whether poets, philosophers, mathematicians or 'historians, orators, doctors, chemists, scholastics', all of these could be found in Arabic literature.<sup>86</sup> Not only were there many in each of these categories, there could be found equivalents 'nowhere else more truthful, more eloquent, more expert, more judicious, more subtle and, I wish to add even this, more daring'.<sup>87</sup> In sum, Fourmont's most striking arguments for Arabic would have been recognizable to those engaged in the quarrel of the ancients and the moderns. Not only did Arabic literature contain many matters of substantive value to French readers, the very experience of reading this foreign literature would afford a moral education to a greater extent than would Greek or Latin books.

After this lengthy paean to the literary and humanist utility of Arabic, Fourmont's treatment of its utility to the state and to religion comes across as rather more perfunctory. Regarding the former, he adduces the argument that divine providence had distributed natural resources throughout the planet to force humans into commerce and to generate sociability, so as to discourage violent and selfish interactions among humans ('men becoming wolves to men').<sup>88</sup> Thus even the ineradicable human desire for profit that philosophers so despised had a providential purpose. The most widely distributed languages were part of this dispensation, as they enabled commerce and could 'sustain

84 In fact, when offered the chance to travel to Constantinople, in 1630, Descartes turned the opportunity down; see A. Hamilton, "'To Divest the East of All Its Manuscripts and All Its Rarities': The Unfortunate Embassy of Henri Gournay de Marcheville", in *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, ed. A. Hamilton et al. (Leiden, 2005), pp. 123–50; 129–30.

85 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 10r: 'Recte id tu quidem, sed hic etiam auxilia tibi sunt Arabicae litterae, quam Latinae, Graecaeque multo plura, multo majora suffecturae.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 61v.

86 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 10r: 'vultis itidem de historicis, de Oratoribus, de Medicis, de Chemicis, de Scholasticis loquar ...' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 61v.

87 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 10r: 'plures nusquam veraciores, eloquentiores, peritiores, prudentiores, subtiliores, nusquam, hoc enim addendum puto, audaciores.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 61v.

88 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 10v: 'Factum sane, providentiâ naturae singulari atque eâ mente, partim ne homines hominibus lupi, cum aliis aliorum auxilio non esset opus.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 62r.

the dignity of the state' by increasing its sphere of operation.<sup>89</sup> Expertise in widely spoken tongues, of which Arabic was a prime example, was surely advantageous.

As for religion, Fourmont evokes the events of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and prompted them to speak to each other in tongues (Acts 2:1–31).<sup>90</sup> This scriptural event emphasized the importance of languages to spreading Christ's message. But Fourmont did not immediately cite the obvious example of the religious utility of language study: its use for conversion. Instead, he described a different use of Arabic in the promotion of true religion. His predecessor in the chair of Arabic, Antoine Galland, had used his Arabic skills to locate Oriental statements of the faith in support of the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation.<sup>91</sup> Galland's research supported the French Catholic effort led by the theologians Pierre Nicole and Antoine Arnauld that aimed to combat Calvinist doctrine.<sup>92</sup> Only after reminding his audience of Galland's efforts did Fourmont indicate Arabic's other religious use: to 'consolidate the reign of Christ and undermine that of Mahomet'.<sup>93</sup> Thus, Arabic's most immediate purpose for the sake of the Catholic religion lay in research into Eastern Christianity; the conversion of Muslims was a secondary goal.<sup>94</sup>

89 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 11r: 'Eas proinde linguas ad regni dignitatem attinere maxime futuras, quae diffusae latissime fuerint.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 62v.

90 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 11v: 'Cogitate, inquam, Auditores, beatissimum illum diem, apostolis Christi expectatum Salutis auctorem ac primitias nostrae, quo fragor e celo auditus ingens, quo linguae ignae in capita delapsae praeconium illorum divinatorum.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 62v.

91 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 11v: 'Gallandius decessor noster, memoriae vir et venerandae et sempiternae, cum litterarum Latinarum, Graecarum, Hebraicarum cognitionem, summam etiam Arabicarum peritiam adjunxisset; atque opem illic suam flagitari intelligeret, ut erat non doctrinâ solum sed etiam pietate quâdam admirabili, indignatus est quod tandiu sublato capite ista haec nefaria haeresis incessisset ergo jam sese proripuit, jam ruit ad plagas Orientales, jam testimonia ecclesiarum undique corrasit, jam tenet Su[um] effectum, Auditores, ut Calvinismus qui olim nugaci Loquacitate importavimus, aeterno num Silentio conticescat.' See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 63r.

92 On Nicole and Arnauld, see A. Hamilton, 'From East to West. Jansenists, Orientalists, and the Eucharistic Controversy', in *How the West was Won: Essays on Literary Imagination, the Canon, and the Christian Middle Ages for Burcht Pranger*, ed. W. Otten et al. (Leiden, 2010), pp. 83–100.

93 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 12r: 'regnum Christi stabiliendum, tollendum Mahummedis'. See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 63v.

94 For a broader treatment, see A. Girard, 'Le christianisme oriental (xvii<sup>e</sup>–xviii<sup>e</sup> siècles). Essor de l'orientalisme catholique en Europe et construction des identités confessionnelles au Proche-Orient', PhD diss. (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, 2011).

In the end, all the uses that Arabic promised depended on attracting students to the language. This was possible, Fourmont thought, if the young were presented with a road to mastering Arabic that was not ‘too long or too rocky’, but instead ‘replete with flowers and fruits’.<sup>95</sup> Fourmont sounded a call to arms; the weapons would be provided by the historians, poets and philosophers of the Arabs. Even here, giving thanks to God, he returned to his main theme, admitting that he felt the ‘greatest pleasure (*voluptas*) in the study of the Arabic language’, even as he pursued it for the sake of advancing God’s glory.<sup>96</sup> Fourmont ended his lecture with praise for Louis XIV and for his patronage of scholarship and of letters.<sup>97</sup> (While extolling the monarch was surely obligatory in this context, in this respect, too, the oration is reminiscent of the *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, which was, among other things, a contest about the most effective way to praise Louis XIV.)<sup>98</sup>

What are we to do with the *Oratio*? That, in spite of his hyperbolic praise of Arabic literary traditions, Fourmont spent most of his career working on Chinese might make us question the sincerity of his arguments. Yet his oration allows us to see in a microcosm the reconfiguration of the value of Arabic in France at this time—from a confessional or missionary resource to one that would benefit literature and, beyond that, the moral constitution of the educated person. This belletristic as well as humanist appreciation of Arabic letters is in line with broader trends in the study of Arabic and other Asian languages in France at this time. What marks the distance from the arguments of Erpenius is not just Fourmont’s positive focus, but his silences: for instance, he chooses not make anything of the opportunity that Arabic presents for an understanding of the biblical text—and this in spite of the fact that, as we saw, he lectured on the Bible in Arabic after his inauguration. The difference is certainly one between Protestant and Catholic approaches to the study of Arabic, but it also reflects the commitment of Parisian scholars in the first two decades of the eighteenth century to the cultivation of the (secular) literary traditions of Asia.

There are other observations to be made. As I noted at the outset, the intellectual upheaval of the *querelle des anciens et des modernes* had ramifications

95 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 12r: ‘Si nulla est praeter Arabicae linguae Cognitionem, si nec longior, nec salebrosa, si contra etiam plena florum plena fructuum: ergo agite Optimi Adolescentes, Dubitatis hanc mecum Ingredi, huc huc animati omnes iuamus.’ See also BnF NAF 8943, fol. 63v.

96 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 12r: ‘attestorque, perceptam quidem a me percipique ab omnibus posse summam ex Arabicâ Linguâ voluptatem’. BnF NAF 8943, fol. 63v.

97 BnF NAF 8972, fol. 12r–v. See also BnF NAF 8943, fols. 63v–64r.

98 Fumaroli, ‘Les abeilles’, pp. 180–82.

well beyond Latin and Greek. New arguments for the classics could be transferred to other literatures. Indeed, Fourmont's arguments were not explosively novel or stupendously contentious; the occasion was not one at which to articulate radically new ideas. Among all the languages of the world, Arabic was an uncontroversial candidate for a globally oriented humanism: not only did it possess many similarities with the literary and scholarly traditions of Western Christians, it was also rooted in similar traditions, both Greek and Abrahamic. As with his predecessors Simon and Renaudot, Fourmont's emphasis fell on the analogies between classical and Arabic literature. Fourmont's Arabs were classical (or postclassical) Arabs. For all of Boivin's insistence that, 'what I like in a Chinese man is a Chinese air, are Chinese manners', he and his peers were still deeply indebted to a classicizing aesthetic.<sup>99</sup>

This is not to diminish the significance of Fourmont's full-throated endorsement of Arabic letters as a tradition that surpassed its classical antecedents. His claims seem all the more remarkable when we consider some of his contemporaries' arguments against Arabic.<sup>100</sup> For example, four years later, the Abbé Dubos, in his influential *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (1719), argued, on climatological grounds, that good art could only be produced at certain latitudes (specifically, between the 55th and the 25th parallel north), which excluded both the frozen and the torrid zones of the world.<sup>101</sup> He was as dismissive of the aesthetics of Chinese crafts ('textiles, porcelain and other curiosities') as he was of the 'poetic compositions of the Orientals' that had been translated, and he believed that his contemporaries were attracted to these works solely on account of their novelty.<sup>102</sup> Unlike Fourmont, and unlike Huet, Dubos did not read Oriental languages—his opinion was formed at second hand. Yet his French treatise, which on theoretical as well as empirical grounds rejected the notion that wide swaths of the world had made contributions to poetry and painting, gained a much wider audience than Fourmont's Latin oration.

Arguments like Dubos's are why Fourmont's willingness to displace classical models in the midst of early eighteenth-century French classicism may surprise us today. But it shouldn't. The culture of Oriental studies at the end of the reign of Louis XIV did not merely foreshadow the literary cosmopolitanism of

99 Boivin, *Apologie d'Homère*, p. 48.

100 See the discussion in J. Tsien, *The Bad Taste of Others: Judging Literary Value in Eighteenth-Century France* (Philadelphia, 2012), ch. 4.

101 Abbé Dubos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture*, 7th ed., 3 vols. (Paris, 1770), 2: 157–8. See Tsien, *Bad Taste*, pp. 101–4.

102 Dubos, *Réflexions critiques*, 2: 167: 'd'étoffes, de porcelaines, et des autres curiosités'. See Tsien, *Bad Taste*, pp. 115–16.



the Enlightenment; it laid the groundwork for it. The Oriental Renaissance that Edgar Quinet and after him Raymond Schwab identified with the Romantic period flourished already in the seventeenth century. As we saw, Fourmont even identified it as such, calling it the 'Renaissance of Oriental languages.'<sup>103</sup> Quinet's formulation, contrasting the classicism of the seventeenth century with the Orientalism of the nineteenth, is a misleading guide, though we can forgive him his lack of historical perspective.<sup>104</sup> Much more intolerable is the ongoing influence of Schwab's superficial treatment of the subject, published in 1950 and translated in 1984.<sup>105</sup> The past thirty-five years of research into the history of Oriental studies in early modern Europe has enabled us to do much better than these dated accounts. The ambiguities of Voltaire and the novel arguments of William Jones may be much more widely recognized in our time than anything written by the erudite scholars of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, but the latter made the former possible. Our literary histories will be much richer, as well as truer, when they recognize as much.

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<sup>103</sup> BnF NAF 8973, fol. 35v: 'Renaissance des langues orientales'.

<sup>104</sup> E. Quinet, 'De la Renaissance orientale', *Revue des deux mondes*, 28 (1841), 112–30; 130: 'Le panthéisme de l'Orient, transformé par l'Allemagne, correspond à la renaissance orientale, de même que l'idéalisme de Platon, corrigé par Descartes, a couronné, au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, la renaissance grecque et latine.'

<sup>105</sup> R. Schwab, *La Renaissance orientale* (Paris, 1950); id., *The Oriental Renaissance. Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East, 1680–1880*, trans. G. Patterson-King and V. Reinking (New York, 1984).

## Richard Pococke and the Natural Curiosities of the East

*Jan Marten Ivo Klaver*

In 1736 Richard Pococke set out on his second Grand Tour. For a year and a half he and his cousin Jeremiah Milles visited large parts of The Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Italy, but in September 1737 Pococke decided to continue alone to the East. He sailed from Leghorn (Livorno) to Alexandria, and for four years he travelled extensively in the Middle East. After going up the Nile to see the ancient monuments between Cairo and the Cataracts during the last months of 1737, he spent the following year visiting the Biblical antiquities in the Holy Land, Lebanon and Syria. At the beginning of 1739 he was again in Egypt, where he stayed for another six months before starting on a slow return journey via Turkey and Greece. In August 1741 Pococke was back in England; and within 18 months he published an account of his travels in the first volume of *A Description of the East* (1743), a popular book that, with its minute descriptions of the monuments of antiquity, earned him a reputation as a pioneer in this field half a century before the colossal Napoleonic *Description de l'Égypte*. In 1745 Pococke brought out a second volume, which concentrated mainly on Palestine, Lebanon and Syria, as well as parts of Turkey and Greece.

Pococke's intellectual depth was widely acclaimed both in England and on the Continent. The preface to the French translation, for example, remarked that Pococke joined to a vast erudition an insatiable ardour to learn from all that relates to antiquity;<sup>1</sup> and the theologian and historical geographer Rutger Schutte wrote that he had long recommended a Dutch translation of Pococke's book. The publication of such a work had been urged on him by a group of scholars who were convinced that they would do Dutch readers an outstanding service by making this valuable information available to them.<sup>2</sup> The

1 'M. Richard Pockocke, à qui nous les devons, joignoit à la plus vaste érudition, une ardeur insatiable de s'instruire de tout ce qui a rapport à l'Antiquité.' Richard Pockocke, *Voyages* (Paris, 1772), préface, p. i.

2 '... dat dit geschied is op aanraadinge en sterken aandrang van verscheidene kundige lieden, die de waarde van dit werk te wel begreepen, dan dat zy een oogenblik zouden twyffelen, of men aan onze Nederlanderen daar mede eenen uitmuntenden dienst zou doen.' Richard Pococke *Beschryving van het Oosten* (Utrecht etc., 1776), voorrede, p. iii.

main accounts of Pococke's life, in order to convey the importance of his work, have repeatedly (mis)quoted Edward Gibbon's famous, but ambivalent, comment: it 'is a work of superior learning and dignity; but the author too often confounds what he had seen and what he had read.'<sup>3</sup> Tributes to *A Description of the East* can also be found in early nineteenth-century reactions. Gilles Boucher de la Richarderie (1808) found that Pococke's research on the antiquities of the East was worthy of praise;<sup>4</sup> and the author and traveller James Augustus St John concluded that 'few travellers are deserving of more credit, or were more competent to describe the countries through which they journeyed'.<sup>5</sup>

Notwithstanding the popularity of *A Description of the East* and its importance for the historiography of classical antiquity, surprisingly little scholarly work has been done on Pococke. Only a handful of short biographical chapters appeared during the nineteenth century; and, although Rachel Finnegan has done important work in her recent editions of Pococke's *Grand Tour Correspondence* and unearthed many interesting details, a full biography has yet to be written.<sup>6</sup> While much attention has been given to his description of classical monuments and his account of the manners and customs of the countries he visited, the story and context of his work on natural history has hardly been mentioned, let alone studied. Yet, the chapters on the natural history of Egypt, Lebanon and Syria, as well as the lists of collected plants, some of which were illustrated in full-page engraved plates, were taken very seriously by his contemporaries. The prefaces to both the French and Dutch editions stressed that botanists and lovers of natural history would find something to learn in

3 Gibbon's opinion is often quoted as a reaction to *A Description of the East* as a whole. Gibbon, however, only referred to a limited part of Pococke's writings on Syria and Mesopotamia in volume 2 (pp. 88–209). Moreover, whereas Gibbon writes 'what he had seen and what he had read', the biographical accounts of Pococke in Kemp, Wroth, Baigent and Finnegan persistently misquote the last part of Gibbon's comment as 'what he had seen and what he had heard'. See Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 6 vols. (London, 1776–89), 1: 314, n. 67; Daniel William Kemp, 'Biographical Sketch of Richard Pococke', in *Richard Pococke, Tours in Scotland 1747, 1750, 1760*, ed., Daniel William Kemp (Edinburgh, 1887) p. xxxvii; W. Wroth, 'Richard Pococke', in *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1896) 46: 13; E. Baigent, 'Pococke, Richard', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2001–2004), <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22432?docPos=1>>; R. Finnegan, *Letters from Abroad: The Grand Tour Correspondence of Richard Pococke & Jeremiah Milles*, 3 vols. (Piltown, 2011–2013), 3: 298.

4 'C'est sur-tout par les recherches que Pococke a faites sur les antiquités d'Orient et de Egypte, que son Voyage est recommandable.' Gilles Boucher de la Richarderie, *Bibliothèque universelle des Voyages*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1806–8) 1: 222.

5 James Augustus St John, *The Lives of Celebrated Travelers*, 3 vols. (London, 1831), 2: 128.

6 R. Finnegan, ed., *Letters from Abroad. The Grand Tour Correspondence of Richard Pococke and Jeremiah Milles*, 3 vols. (Piltown, 2011–13).

Pococke's book.<sup>7</sup> Schutte, in the Dutch preface, maintained that 'Mr. Pococke showed by all means to be a man of excellent power, of a sharp mind, of a clever ingenuity and of a penetrating judgment, distinguished and capable in many sciences,' amongst which he specified '*kruidkunde*' (botany).<sup>8</sup> The French editor even explicitly linked Pococke's botanical feats to a valiant enterprise in the following, rather romantic, passage:

Botany is not a sedentary and lazy science that can be acquired in the cabinet, like Geometry and History, which require little movement; it requires one to cross mountains, to climb steep rocks, to expose oneself to the edges of precipices; and it is necessary to be as indefatigable as our English Traveller, to engage with fatigue and danger.<sup>9</sup>

That Pococke accomplished no such heroic feats emerges from the apology in his own preface to *A Description of the East*: 'it would be straining politeness to too high a pitch, to say that he is sorry he did not meet with more unlucky accidents, in order to relate a greater variety of pleasant stories'.<sup>10</sup>

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It is difficult to ascertain just how much botanical or zoological knowledge Pococke possessed. The biographical accounts do not shed light on any specific studies or training in this direction. Rachel Finnegan illustrates Pococke's strong collecting habits during his foreign travels, and, although this concerned mainly objects of antiquity, she notes that he was 'also an enthusiastic col-

7 'Botanistes & les Amateurs de l'Histoire Naturelle y trouveront de quoi s'instruire.' Pococke, *Voyages*, préface, p. iv; 'De beminnaars van de natuurlyke historie, van ... 't ryk der planten en dieren, ... zullen hier, des ben ik wel verzekerd, zich zeer voldaan achten, door een pen die door de opmerkzaamheid van de geleerdheid verzeld, gestadig schynt bestierd te weezen.' Pococke, *Beschryving van het Oosten*, voorrede, p. v.

8 'De Heer Pococke toonde allerwege een' man te zyn van uitsteekende vermogens, van een schrander verstand, een snedig vernuft en een doordringend oordeel, beschaafd en doorkneed in menigvuldige wetenschappen, taalen, oudheden, bouw- kruid- historie- en aardklootkunde.' Pococke, *Beschryving van het Oosten*, voorrede, p. iv.

9 'La Botanique n'es point une science sédentaire & paresseuse que l'on puisse acquérir dans le cabinet, comme la Géométrie & l'Histoire, qui demandent peu de mouvement; elle exige que l'on parcoure les montagnes, que l'on gravisse les rochers escarpés, que l'on s'expose aux bords des précipices; & il a fallu être aussi infatigable que notre Voyageur Anglois, pour s'être livré à la fatigue & au péril de les chercher.' Pococke, *Voyages*, préface, p. vi.

10 Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries*, 2 vols. (London, 1743-45), 1: v.

lector of natural curiosities'.<sup>11</sup> His letters clearly bear out that during his Continental tour Pococke was indeed interested in natural history collections. When he consulted the famous Dutch botanist and physician Herman Boerhaave in Leiden about his health, he also used the occasion to see 'the physic Garden',<sup>12</sup> and while travelling through Germany in 1736 he met the botanist Johann Ernst Hebenstreit, who showed him the royal natural history collection in Dresden.<sup>13</sup> Hebenstreit, who had travelled in Africa between 1730 and 1733 to collect plants and animals for King Augustus II of Poland, also showed him the private natural history collections and gardens in the town. Pococke was much impressed by the 'greatest collection of monsters ... that I ever saw'.<sup>14</sup>

There is, moreover, clear evidence from Pococke's correspondence that he collected natural curiosities himself. In a letter written on 6 December 1739 he urged his mother to send seeds he had collected to the professor of botany at Oxford;<sup>15</sup> and in a letter dated 19 February 1740 he included the following instructions:

Of those Dates you will receive from Egypt, pray sow some in the month of May, in the garden & some in a pot, which you may sometimes water, & some in a pot kept without water, –& send some with the other seeds to Oxford; & perhaps you may have Palm trees: –they come up with one leaf, like a Plantane leaf; & when up should be watered a little; –you may also sow of that large fruit the Dome, of which I have put up two or three for Oxford, & also of the cedar apples, which will without [missing word] grow, but I suppose they should be opened, & the seeds taken out, –for which purpose choose one of the largest & soundest but not that one which you will find not separated from the bough.<sup>16</sup>

The letters do not reveal any scientific interest in these trees, and Pococke's instructions to have seeds sent to Oxford must rather be seen as part of his collector's urge to have specimens of exotic trees grown at home. There had been a fashion for such trees ever since seventeenth-century travellers had tried to grow trees in English gardens from seeds they had collected abroad. Lebanon cedars grown from foreign seed, for example, could be seen at the time in the Chelsea Physic Garden in London; and Pococke's distant relative,

11 R. Finnegan, 'The Travels and Curious Collections of Richard Pococke, Bishop of Meath', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 27.1 (2015), 33–48; 33.

12 Finnegan, *Letters from Abroad*, 2: 50 (6 July 1736).

13 *Ibid.*, 2: 134 (10 December 1736).

14 *Ibid.*, 2: 122–3 (22 December 1736).

15 *Ibid.*, 3: 227 (6 December 1739).

16 *Ibid.*, 3: 236 (19 January 1740).

the Orientalist Edward Pococke, who in the 1630s had been a chaplain in Aleppo and Constantinople, grew a Lebanon cedar in his rectory garden near Oxford. It is a coincidence that the Lebanon cedars at Highclere Castle, where Richard Pococke's grandfather had been rector, and which were grown from seeds collected by him in 1738 on Mount Lebanon, were later in the century joined by trees grown from seeds collected from the trees Edward Pococke had sown during the previous century.<sup>17</sup>

As Pococke had pursued his studies at the University of Oxford—he enrolled at Christ Church College in 1720 and received his doctoral degree in 1733—it was only natural that he wanted to send some of the seeds he had collected to his old university. Although Oxford's Physic Garden, founded in 1621, was one of the earliest botanical gardens at a European university, during the first decades of the eighteenth century it lagged far behind the botanical gardens at the universities of Leiden and Amsterdam in terms of scientific prestige. The board's decision in 1718 that it would no longer sustain the costs of the garden led to the dismissal of its gardener, and was seen by many as indicative of its further decline. However, the botanical garden was saved from utter ruin when the botanist William Sherard endowed the university with the huge sum of £3,000. As a result, during the early 1730s, the very years that Pococke was working there for his Doctorate of Civil Law, hothouses and conservatories for Sherard's herbarium and library were built on its grounds, and his protégé Johann Jacob Dillenius was nominated as the first Sherardian Professor of Botany and keeper of the hortus botanicus. Pococke would have followed these developments at his alma mater with interest, and this explains why, in 1739 and 1740, he asked his mother to send the seeds he had collected in the East to the new botanical gardens.

In his letters to his mother Pococke occasionally refers to collecting shells, fossils, and minerals, but other than the instances in Leiden and Dresden from the early part of his tour, and the sowing instructions from the latter part, they contain no evidence of true scientific botanical or zoological interest. Although the correspondence abounds with details of food, meeting people and visiting antiquities, Pococke never describes going out into the country to collect specimens of plants or animals, and the letters evince but little of the hardship and danger mentioned in the preface to the French edition of *A Description of the East*. Although he repeatedly attempts to shoot a crocodile, something in which he fails miserably, he seems hardly interested in plants, insects, birds

<sup>17</sup> See F. Nigel Hepper, 'The Cultivation of the Cedar of Lebanon in Western European Parks and Gardens from the 17th to the 19th Century,' *Arboricultural Journal*, 25.3 (2001) 197–219; 207–8.

(except those he could eat) or the smaller mammals from a scientific point of view.

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Finnegan notes that, since the beginning of his travels in the East, Pococke had been putting together a vast collection of medals, coins and antiquities, but that it was in Egypt that 'his interest in natural history was beginning to outweigh that of antiquities'.<sup>18</sup> She bases this statement on the records of the sales of Pococke's collections after his death, which list 207 lots of parcels, two-thirds of which contained shells, pebbles, slabs of marble, stones, minerals, soils and fossils. It is important to underline, though, that this interest in natural history shown by the catalogue mainly developed in the context of collecting. Of the 207 lots auctioned on 5–6 June 1766, only 9 contained collected species of animals and plants, which can hardly be seen as proof of a systematic gathering of specimens for study. Moreover, the contents of these lots are miscellaneous and were not exclusively collected during his travels in the East. Lots 85 and 86, for example, auctioned on 5 June, included a large bat, the jaws of fish, a gosling with three legs, a head of a buffalo, a rhinoceros's horn, cartilage of a whale, a tortoise and porcupine quills, while lots 77 and 78, auctioned on 6 June, contained elk horns, the skin of a serpent, a bird's nest, a jaw of a tortoise, the head of a roebuck, the slough and rattle of a rattlesnake, the saw of a sawfish, a dried scorpion and two beetles. The tiger listed in lot 78 for 5 June presumably refers to a tiger snail. For both auction days, however, there were also parcels containing dried plants (lots 84 and 80), 'fruits, woods and seeds' (lots 82 and 83, 5 June; lot 79, 6 June).<sup>19</sup>

Many of the items sold by auction in 1766 were indeed obtained during Pococke's travels in the East, but numerous further specimens were added from various parts of the British Isles after his return from the Grand Tour, while others were bought from other travellers (e.g. the rattlesnake) to complete his growing collection. Pococke neatly summed up his own collecting habits in a letter to his mother from Cairo:

18 Finnegan, 'The Travels and Curious Collections', p. 38.

19 [A. Langford], *A Catalogue of a Large and Curious Collection of Ancient Statues, Urns, Mummies, Fossils, Shells, and other Curiosities, of the Right Reverend Dr. Pococke, Lord Bishop of Meath, Deceased. Collected by his Lordship, during his Travels which (by Order of the Administrator) will be sold by Auction, by Mr Langford and Son, at their House in the Great Piazza, Covent Garden, On Thursday the 5th, and Friday the 6th of this Instant June 1766* [London, 1766], pp. 7, 11.

You see I am a Collector of Curiosities so as you have opportunity, you may desire your friends who live in sea port towns, if they meet with anything curious as shells, coralls, medals, ancient or modern &c: to secure them for me & I will pay the cost.<sup>20</sup>

The emphasis here is again on the term 'collector' rather than 'student' or 'natural historian', which confirms that Pococke was interested in *collecting curiosities* of natural history rather than methodically *studying specimens*.

If, on the other hand, an increasing amount of descriptions of animals and plants in his letters of 1738–39 does seem to corroborate the notion of Pococke's growing interest in natural history during the latter part of his tour, we should bear in mind that by 1738 he had decided to publish an account of his travels, and that many passages in his letters were meant as first drafts of chapters for his future book. As a result, several letters appear verbatim in the published account, which, as Finnegan correctly observes, 'suggests that Pococke composed the greater part of his book while on his travels, rather than on his return to London'.<sup>21</sup> Just how much he later relied on these early drafts is illustrated by a passage in which he describes the snakes in Cyprus. In a letter of 15 December 1738 to his uncle, Bishop Milles of Waterford and Lismore, he mentions a big asp which 'is called Kouphi by reason that it is deaf' and, after a brief description of the animal, adds that, as 'there is an Asp in Italy which is not deaf, it is possible the Psalmist might speak of this creature, when he makes mention of the deaf adder'.<sup>22</sup> The logic of this statement is based on the fact that this snake is said to be deaf. Instead, in the second volume of *A Description of the East* Pococke inexplicably inserts 'blind' in square brackets as the meaning of the Greek word 'Kouphi', but forgets to check the meaning of the passage, which does not make sense if the Cyprian snake is blind rather than deaf:

it is called Kouphi [Blind]. ... I have been informed that there is an asp in Italy which is not deaf: It is possible the Psalmist might mean this reptile, when he made mention of the deaf adder.<sup>23</sup>

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20 Finnegan, *Letters from Abroad*, 3: 194 (31 January 1739).

21 R. Finnegan, ed., *Letters from the East from Richard Pococke to Bishop Milles, 1737–39*; part 4: *Letters from Cyprus (1738)* (Piltown, 2015), p. 3.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 18; Pococke has the Greek *κουφός* in mind, and, of course, refers to Psalm 58.

23 Pococke, *Description of the East*, 2: 232.



When Pococke decided to publish an account of the countries he had visited, he had to measure himself against Thomas Shaw's recently published *Travels, or Observations Relating to Several Parts of Barbary and the Levant* (1738).<sup>24</sup> After taking orders in 1719, Shaw was appointed Chaplain to the English factory in Algiers, and travelled during the following decade in North Africa, Egypt, Palestine and Syria. His *Travels, or Observations* contain much topographical and archaeological information in an attempt to trace the remains of a classical European antiquity which had existed in the East before it was conquered by the Arabs. In this sense it was the typical eighteenth-century justification for a European return to the area.<sup>25</sup> Shaw's book also included detailed descriptions of its inhabitants and its natural history.

At some stage in 1738 or 1739 Pococke must have heard of this work and asked his mother to send him a copy. On 13 November 1739, however, he suddenly dismissed 'Dr Shaws book, which I have seen & do not now want.'<sup>26</sup> But whatever the reasons for his low opinion of Shaw's book, he could not have failed to notice the detailed sections on natural history and Dillenius's professional assistance in drawing up a *Specimen Phytographiae Africanae &c.; or A Catalogue of Some of the Rarer Plants of Barbary, Egypt and Arabia*, which listed 632 species,<sup>27</sup> including 'near a hundred and forty unknown Species'.<sup>28</sup>

The *Specimen Phytographiae* was to earn Shaw quite a reputation. It was mentioned in numerous later botanical works and was referenced in Sydenham Edward's *Botanical Register*,<sup>29</sup> a popular Georgian horticultural magazine with sumptuous colour illustrations; also, in 1867, a writer in *The Quarterly Review* mentioned 'the excellence of his scientific observations, especially in botany'.<sup>30</sup> For his book, which was described in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as 'a noble example of typography',<sup>31</sup> Shaw commissioned six full-page plates depicting thirty species of plants. These botanical plates, which added to the visual appeal of Shaw's work, are actually rather unartistically crude (and sometimes hopelessly inaccurate) unsigned engravings that were prepared from pressed specimens.

24 Thomas Shaw, *Travels, or Observations Relating to Several Parts of Barbary and the Levant* (Oxford, 1738).

25 See A. Hamilton, *The European Legacy: Arab and Islamic Culture in the Heritage Library of Qatar Foundation* (Doha, 2006), p. 177.

26 Finnegan, *Letters from Abroad*, 3: 223 (13 November 1739).

27 Shaw lists a further 8 species in the preface to *Travels, or Observations*, p. xiii.

28 *Ibid.*, p. xii.

29 *The Botanical Register*, 5 (1819); Pococke's *Description* is not included in its 'Catalogue of Books'.

30 'Westmorland', *The Quarterly Review*, 122 (1867), 347-81; 370.

31 T. Seccombe, 'Thomas Shaw', *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1897), 51: 446.

Although in late 1739 and early 1740 Pococke had urged his mother to forward seeds to Dillenius in Oxford, when he returned to England in 1741 to write his own travel account, he did not seek the help of the Oxford professor. Instead, for his collection of plants, Pococke turned to Philip Miller in London. It is difficult to say whether Dillenius was unwilling to work on Pococke's material, or whether Pococke was looking for a better botanist. Perhaps wanting to rival the natural history in Shaw's *Travels, or Observations* had something to do with this decision, as Miller was probably the most distinguished English horticulturist of his time. Since 1722 he had been the head gardener of the Apothecaries' Physic Garden at Chelsea, and under his curatorship the garden had grown into the most richly stocked botanical garden in Europe.<sup>32</sup> He was the author of the immensely popular *Gardeners Dictionary* (1731), a book which went through a succession of editions between 1731 and 1768, and of which Linnaeus allegedly said: 'Non erit Lexicon Hortulanorum, sed etiam Botanicorum' (It will not only be a lexicon for gardeners, but also for botanists.).<sup>33</sup> Miller's international reputation would certainly have agreed with Pococke's ambitions.

The first volume of *A Description of the East* appeared in 1743 and contained Pococke's 'Observations on Egypt', while the second volume, published in 1745, included his 'Observations on Palestine or the Holy Land, Syria, Mesopotamia, Cyprus, and Candia' (Part One) and 'Observations on the Islands of the Archipelago, Asia Minor, Thrace, Greece, and some other Parts of Europe' (Part Two). Each volume contained brief chapters on natural history, as well as lists of the plants Pococke had collected during his travels. In these lists Miller recorded a total of 414 species,<sup>34</sup> thirteen of which were marked 'N.D.' (non descript).

Pococke managed to employ the most sought-after botanical illustrator of the century, Georg Dionysius Ehret. A German by birth, Ehret, after having worked for various patrons in Germany, France and the Netherlands, settled in England in 1736. He was received at the Chelsea Physic Garden by Miller, who exerted himself to obtain work for him, and whose sister-in-law he married in 1738.<sup>35</sup> For *A Description of the East* Ehret made drawings from the dried

32 See H. Le Rougetel, *The Chelsea Gardener Philip Miller 1691–1771* (London, 1990), pp. 9–19.

33 Henry Field, *Memoirs, Historical and Illustrative, of the Botanick Garden at Chelsea; belonging to the Society of Apothecaries of London* (London, 1820), p. 61.

34 Pococke divided them as follows: vol. 1 (pp. 282–4): Egypt (61), Arabia Petraea (34); vol. 2, part 2 (pp. 188–96): Palestine (126), Syria (76), Asia Minor (14), Bithynia (6), Mesopotamia (12), Istria-Croatia (53), and Hungary (32).

35 See 'A Memoir of Georg Dionysius Ehret', in *Proceedings of the Linnean Society of London*, trans. E.S. Barton, Sessions 107–8 (1894–95), 41–58; 51.

specimens that Pococke had brought home.<sup>36</sup> These he engraved on eight full-page plates. Little attention has been paid to these engravings in studies of Ehret's art. Gerta Calman values them merely as scientific illustrations which 'lack the 'characteristics' of plants;<sup>37</sup> and Wilfrid Blunt and William Stearn maintain that 'Ehret, as an engraver, was usually competent but uninspired'.<sup>38</sup> Yet, the plates he produced for Pococke's volumes had none of the uninspired dullness of the anonymous illustrations in Shaw's *Travels, or Observations*. Ehret's are three-dimensional impressions, his drawings of plants often playfully intertwining on the page. They show that even in his engravings Ehret did 'not slavishly imitate what he saw, as do so many botanical draughtsmen with a purely scientific training'.<sup>39</sup> He depicted the Doum palm on two separate plates, in one of which he artistically reproduced a fan-shaped leaf, and a section of the palm's trunk is placed in a landscape with the full tree in the background. This plate is one of the most evocative botanical illustrations in Pococke's volumes.



The publication of Pococke's *Description of the East* mightily annoyed Shaw. He resented the way Pococke criticized the notions of 'some People, certain Authors' when it was clear to him that 'all of them [the notions] appear to be my own'.<sup>40</sup> Shaw had 'flattered' himself that 'on Account of the great Intimacy and Friendship [that ... ], without giving me some previous Notice and Advice, He would not, in so unexpected a Manner, have drawn me into a Controversy'.<sup>41</sup> But what riled him above all was

that, in several Points, hitherto overlooked or disregarded or mistaken by former Travellers, I had carried the Torch and marked out the Way before him; yet he has not vouchsafed, so much as once, in this Voluminous

36 Only the *Capsicum filiquis erectis, luteis minus* on plate 74 was drawn from a specimen grown from Pococke's seeds at the Chelsea Physic Garden.

37 G. Calman, *Ehret, Flower Painter Extraordinary: An Illustrated Biography* (Oxford, 1977), p. 67.

38 W. Blunt and W.T. Stearn, *The Art of Botanical Illustration* (Woodbridge, 2015), p. 162.

39 Blunt and Stearn, *The Art of Botanical Illustration*, p. 160.

40 Pococke never calls Shaw by name; Shaw, for his part, never mentions Pococke but usually refers to him as 'this author' and 'this gentleman'.

41 Thomas Shaw, *A Supplement to a Book entituled Travels, or Observations, &c. Wherein Some Objections, Lately Made against It, Are Fully Considered and Answered: With Several Additional Remarks and Dissertations* (Oxford, 1746), p. xv.

Work, to acknowledge the Assistance, or the many useful Hints, at least, which he had received from my Book of *Travels*.<sup>42</sup>

Shaw therefore decided to vindicate himself and published in 1746 a *Supplement* to his *Travels, or Observations*. He specified that he did not mean to dwell on all the dubious passages in Pococke's work, but wanted to concentrate only on a small subset of points 'of greater Moment and Consequence'. Various of these fell under the heading 'Some of the Plants and Animals of *Egypt* further explained and illustrated'.<sup>43</sup> While an in-depth study of all Shaw's claims in his *Supplement* would be a fruitful future undertaking, here it will be enough to look at some of his objections to Pococke's material on natural history. These objections are, to say the least, questionable.

It is hardly surprising that Shaw spotted Pococke's confusing passage about the deaf viper. From its mangled logic he could not but infer that the author meant that the Italian viper was possibly the one mentioned in the Bible. This passage, however, had nothing to do with his own annotations in *Travels, or Observations*, nor with Egypt. More pertinent to Shaw's task is his discussion of three of Pococke's Egyptian plants: the Musa, the Cicer and the Thebaic palm. Shaw maintained that the plant Pococke called *Moseh* had actually 'long been known to botanists, by the name of *Musa*',<sup>44</sup> and that he himself had mentioned it twice in his own work. However, Shaw's criticism does not centre on the fact that no previous authors were mentioned, but rather that Pococke called it *Moseh*, 'as if it was intended, to have been given us, for a *non-descript* or new Plant'. Yet Pococke did no such thing. In his discussion of trees in Egypt, he merely asserted: 'Those which are only in gardens, as the Cassia, the orange and lemon kind, apricots, the *Moseh*, a delicate fruit, that cannot be preserved'.<sup>45</sup> Miller included the *Musa* in Pococke's list of species,<sup>46</sup> but did not mark it 'N.D.'. Instead he provided a reference to the French botanist Charles Plumier, who, in *Nova plantarum Americanarum genera*, had noted that '*Musa* est nomen apud quosdam orientales usitatum' (*Musa* is the name commonly used by certain Orientals).<sup>47</sup> Shaw might have pointed out the inconsistency of Pococke's naming, but he was definitely not justified in claiming that Pococke introduced the *Moseh* as a new species.

42 Ibid., p. xv.

43 Ibid., p. xvi.

44 Ibid., p. 60.

45 Pococke, *Description of the East*, 1: 205.

46 Ibid., 1: 283.

47 Charles Plumier, *Nova plantarum Americanarum genera* (Paris, 1703), p.24.

Shaw levelled a similar criticism at Pococke's *Haum*, which 'by a proper Inquiry, he might have found ... to have been the *Cicer*, *Garvansa* or *Chich Pea*, (as it is differently named;) a leguminous Plant, which I have more than once mentioned'.<sup>48</sup> But all Pococke really said was that the Egyptians 'sow a sort of vetch with one large grain on each pod, call'd Haum, which they eat raw when green, and, dressed, is not much inferior to pease, which they have not, but they are used mostly dry'.<sup>49</sup> Again, Pococke might not have realized the connection to Shaw's leguminous plant, but he did not imply in his description that we are dealing with a new species here. Given that Shaw criticized on the same grounds many of the animals Pococke merely mentioned in his account, his concluding attack on Pococke is gratuitous:

There is nothing that occasions greater Confusion in the several Branches of Natural History, than that any Species of Plants or Animals should have new Names and Descriptions given to them, after that their old ones have already received a sufficient Sanction and Authority.<sup>50</sup>

Pococke did not provide descriptive epithets in Latin, which would have been a prerequisite in naming new plants. This indicates that he merely wanted to record their uses and local names, and not to introduce them as new species. Unlike his later chapter 'Of Egyptian and Arabian plants' (book 5, ch. 18), drawn up in Latin by Miller and placed under 'Miscellaneous Subjects' at the very end of Pococke's volume, his chapters in English 'Of the Vegetables of Egypt' (book 4, ch. 8) and 'Of the Animals of Egypt' (book 4, ch. 9) are far too generic to be meant as a contribution to botanical or zoological classification.

The gingerbread tree, or Doum palm, is a different case. Pococke's 'Palma Thebaica' was clearly marked as a new species, and he specified that he could not 'find, that what I call the Thebaic palm, the Dome tree of Thebaid, has ever been mention'd by any author'.<sup>51</sup> Shaw objected that this was the same tree which Theophrastus mentioned, Johann Bauhin described as 'Palmae facie Cuciofera' and he himself included in his *Phytographia*.<sup>52</sup> Pococke's mention of the gingerbread tree was clearly not unique and reveals some shallowness in his research methods. Yet, Miller too indicated the species as non-descript in his list; and Linnaeus in *Species plantarum* referred to Pococke's description,

48 Shaw, *Supplement*, p.60.

49 Pococke, *Description of the East*, 1: 204.

50 Shaw, *Supplement*, p. 62.

51 Pococke, *Description of the East*, 1: 281.

52 Shaw, *Supplement*, pp. 60–1.

and Ehret's plates, of 'Palma Thebaica' for his description of *Corypha thebaica*.<sup>53</sup> Apparently, Pococke distinguished himself by giving the first full description and providing the first detailed illustration of the Doum palm. The species has since been moved to a different genus, but, of course, still carries Pococke's specific name: *Hyphaene thebaica* (L.) Mart.

As far as the chapters on natural history are concerned, Shaw's complaints about Pococke's book are only very partially articulated. Pococke clearly did not inform Shaw of the purport of his work, but in these sections he never slightly referred to him as 'some People, certain Authors'. It is also doubtful whether in these chapters Pococke did not want to acknowledge that Shaw 'carried the Torch and marked out the Way before him'. On the contrary, had he consulted Shaw's *Travels, or Observations* carefully he might have saved himself from making some superficial statements. In fact, Shaw's breadth of knowledge of natural history was far superior to Pococke's. What Shaw's critique does bring out, though, is that, apart from a handful of classical authorities (Herodotus, Strabo, Diodorus, Pausanias and Ptolemy), Pococke did not use or consult any other text, ancient or modern. It is a pity that Shaw did not limit himself to pointing out that

we cannot sufficiently regret, that, amidst that Number of other Subjects, which he has thought fit to treat of, he should have been so little interested and engaged in this. For had this Gentleman been as copious in his Drawings, and as circumstantial in his Descriptions of the Animals and Plants of these Countries, as he has been in measuring out the Ruins, and in taking their several Views and Elevations; these Branches of Knowledge might have received considerable Light and Augmentation; and the learned World would still have been more highly obliged to him, for such additional and no less useful Discoveries.<sup>54</sup>

If Shaw had concentrated on this issue, rather than feeling piqued that Pococke did not acknowledge him by name, he would have made a valid point and laid bare a weakness in Pococke's approach.

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The dividing line between a collector and a naturalist can be very thin, but Pococke was clearly more of the first than the second. Shaw wrote of his

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53 Carl Linnaeus, *Species plantarum*, 2 vols. (Stockholm, 1753), 2: 1187.

54 Shaw, *Supplement*, pp. 83–4.

collection of dried plants: 'We carefully compared all my Specimens, with that large and well-digested Collection of dried Plants, which Dr. W. Sherard bequeathed to the Physick Garden of the University of Oxford ... But lest any Mistakes should have been committed in the descriptions of These or of the marine Vegetables, the Author has deposited the Originals in the Sherardian Collection.'<sup>55</sup> Pococke, on the other hand, did not deposit his specimens in a public herbarium but kept the collection in his own possession. Because of this, botanists soon lost trace of Pococke's collection of plants.

Charles Nelson has recently maintained that Pococke 'must have collected several hundred herbarium specimens', and, in a reference to Ehret's plates, he surmised that 'pressed and dried specimens must have existed for him to depict'.<sup>56</sup> Nelson's assumptions are, of course, correct. Langford's 1766 sales catalogue of Pococke's collections, in fact, includes two entries of a herbarium, one for the first auction day (5 June, lot 84) and one for the following day (lot 80). Both are labelled by Langford as 'A hortus siccus, collected by his lordship during his travels.' This means that there existed two separate herbaria at the time. Although we do not know into whose hands Pococke's collections of dried plants passed after 1766, one of the two herbaria is today in the Heritage Library of Qatar.<sup>57</sup> The plants in the Heritage Library are conserved in numbered folded paper sleeves which are kept in a huge leather-bound volume with the title *Travels-Botany* embossed on the spine.<sup>58</sup> Unfortunately the majority of the specimens in this volume are plants Pococke collected in Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, Hungary, Greece and Italy, and there are even 21 species of English provenance.<sup>59</sup> Most of the plants Pococke collected in Egypt and Arabia Petraea, and which Miller listed in the first volume of *A Description of the East*, were presumably part of the other hortus siccus auctioned by Langford and of which all traces have since been lost.

55 Shaw, *Travels, or Observations*, p.xiii.

56 E.C. Nelson, 'Review of Finnegan, Rachel, ed., *Letters from abroad: the Grand Tour Correspondence of Richard Pococke and Jeremiah Milles*', *Archives of Natural History*, 41.1 (2014), 176–7; 177.

57 See Hamilton, *The European Legacy*, pp. 50–1; O.H. Sayed, 'Appraisal into Phytochemistry and Taxonomy of an Old Plant Collection from the Middle East', *Qatar University Science Journal*, 17.1 (1997), 121–6; M. Hammam Fikri, 'ريشارد بوكوك امع العينات النباتية', *al-Qafilah* (February–March 1998), 42–5.

58 For this part of my study I gratefully acknowledge the generous assistance I received from Mohammed Hammam Fikri, Heritage & Rare Books Advisor of the Heritage Library, in procuring essential photographic material for me. Mr. Mahmoud M.Z. Gomaa graciously transmitted this material to me.

59 Cf. Sayed, 'Appraisal into Phytochemistry and Taxonomy', table 1, p. 123.

The information written on the specimen sheets in the volume of dried plants in the Heritage Library is by no means complete or consistent. The sleeves are annotated in two different handwritings: one hand gives a generic description of the plant plus some concise information about the site where it was collected (e.g. 'Yellow Everlasting flower on Mt Olympus in Bithynia'; 'Sort of dwarf elder Mt Sinai'), while another hand provides a full pre-Linnaean Latin name and assigns the species a number. The collection of dried specimens has a separate handwritten index in three columns. The first two columns copy the information in the upright handwriting on the specimen sleeves and are marked with the words 'In Dr. Pococks own writing'. This would indicate that the description in the upright handwriting on the sleeves is Poccocke's original annotation, while the Latin names and consecutive numbering of the specimens in the second hand were added at a later stage. As the index includes various plants collected in England which have their proper numbered and alphabetical place in the index, it is unlikely that these later professional additions were written by Miller, whose elegant calligraphy the handwriting on the sleeves somewhat resembles: Poccocke would not have given Miller the material he collected in the East together with dried plants from England, nor would Miller have sorted out, and annotated, Poccocke's complete collection of exsiccata for a compilation of the list of plants for *A Description of the East*. The later additions on the specimen sleeves were most likely provided by the new owner of the herbarium after it was auctioned in 1766.



The modest value of the descriptions on the specimen sleeves in the volume in the Heritage Library reveals that Poccocke's botanical knowledge was rather limited. Admittedly, Shaw's attack on the chapters on natural history in *A Description of the East* was not entirely fair; but he was right in pointing out Poccocke's lack of knowledge of previous writers on the plants and animals of the Arab world. One has to keep in mind, though, that Poccocke never claimed he was an expert naturalist, and he was prudent enough to leave the identification of the plants he had collected during his travels to a professional botanist. Moreover, Poccocke's unwillingness to deposit his unique collection of dried plants at Chelsea Physic Garden shows a lack of scientific spirit.

Poccocke was hardly more forthcoming in other fields of natural history. Finnegan writes that 'Poccocke gained the respect and esteem of important scholars and collectors in the field of natural history',<sup>60</sup> but again nothing

<sup>60</sup> Finnegan, 'Travels and Curious Collections', p. 44.



indicates that he was scientifically versed himself. The reputation of his natural history collection was based largely on his fossils and shells, many of which were collected during his travels. Yet, unlike Shaw, who had separate learned sections in Latin on corals, fossils and shells in *Travels, or Observations*, there is no similar treatment of these in Pococke's book. All this points to the fact that, notwithstanding the hype in the French and Dutch editions that Pococke was an indefatigable 'botaniste' and penetrating mind in 'kruidkunde', the scientific standing of *A Description of the East* was mainly due to Miller and Ehret. In the end, Pococke was a keen collector of natural curiosities rather than an experienced and scientifically inclined naturalist.

## Patrick Russell and the *Arabian Nights* Manuscripts

*Maurits H. van den Boogert*

It rarely happens that any two copies of the *Alf Lila va Lilin* resemble each other.

EDWARD DANIEL CLARKE<sup>1</sup>



The names of several scholars are closely connected to the introduction of the stories of *A Thousand and One Nights*, or the *Arabian Nights*, into Europe. First and foremost, Antoine Galland single-handedly acquainted the West with these ‘Oriental stories’ through his multi-volume French translation, which was first published between 1704 and 1717. For the Anglo-Saxon world, the nineteenth-century English translations by Edward W. Lane (1838-1840) and Sir Richard Burton (1885) immediately come to mind.

Another author who popularized the genre of the Oriental stories in Great Britain was Captain Frederick Marryat, whose *The Pacha of Many Tales*, first published in 1835, was a great commercial success. Only in 1875 was Marryat posthumously accused of plagiarism, when an attentive reader compared Marryat’s novel with a story called ‘Basem the Blacksmith’, a translation of which from the Arabic had been available since the late eighteenth century. Marryat changed a few names but otherwise clearly copied the entire story. The eighteenth-century translation that Marryat used as a model was produced by Patrick Russell on the basis of his own private manuscript collection and was published by the famous literary figure William Beloe. In 1875 Marryat’s accuser ended his letter to the editor of *The Academy* with the query: ‘Is anything known of Beloe’s friend Dr. Russell, and his volume of Arabian stories he brought from Aleppo?’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Edward D. Clarke, *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa*, 2 vols. (London, 1813), 2: 707 (Appendix No. 1v).

<sup>2</sup> Henry C. Coote, ‘Captain Marryat a Plagiarist’, in *The Academy. A Weekly Review of Literature, Science, and Art*, 27 February 1875, pp. 218-19.

Patrick Russell M.D. was a Scottish physician who settled in the Syrian city of Aleppo in 1750, joining his elder half-brother, Alexander Russell, who was the Levant Company physician there. When Alexander returned to Britain in 1753, Patrick succeeded him as the British community's physician, staying in Aleppo until 1771. In the meantime, Alexander had published a book that would become one of the most important sources of knowledge about the Eastern Mediterranean in the English-speaking world, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, printed in a single volume in 1756. Alexander Russell died in 1768, while Patrick was still in Syria. Patrick first returned to Scotland in 1772 but was soon persuaded by his friends to move to London, where he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1777. In 1781 he accompanied his younger brother, Claud Russell, to the Coromandel Coast of India, where Claud had been appointed administrator at Vizagapatam by the East India Company. Patrick was eventually appointed the official East India Company Naturalist there, in which capacity he studied both the flora and fauna of the region. In 1789 the Russell brothers returned to London, where Patrick died in 1805.<sup>3</sup>

Patrick Russell was important for the reception of the *Arabian Nights* in three ways. Firstly, in the second edition of *The Natural History of Aleppo*, which he edited and republished in 1794, we find an extensive description of an eighteenth-century professional story-teller. Because it is the most detailed published account of storytelling in Aleppo by one of the most reliable Western authors, it is quoted in the literature time and again.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, Patrick brought home a collection of Arabic manuscripts, several of which contain *Arabian Nights* stories, as well as so-called Additional Nights, which are considered not to belong to the core corpus, and other popular tales. Thirdly, he eventually translated nineteen of these 'Oriental Tales' for his friend, William Beloe, who published them in his *Miscellanies* in 1795.<sup>5</sup> Six of these translated stories were published as a monthly serial in *The Freemason's Magazine* in the

3 For the most extensive biographical sketch of Patrick Russell's life, see Janet Starkey, *The Scottish Enlightenment Abroad. The Russells of Braidshaw in Aleppo and on the Coast of Coromandel* (Leiden, 2018), pp. 21-39, 89-114. See also M.H. van den Boogert, *Aleppo Observed: Ottoman Syria Through the Eyes of Two Scottish Doctors, Alexander and Patrick Russell* (Oxford, 2010).

4 Already in 1812 Henry Weber noted with regard to storytellers that 'the account of these recitations, given by Dr. Russel, an author of unimpeached veracity, in his History of Aleppo, has been frequently quoted'—followed by the quotation in full: *Tales of the East*, ed. Henry Weber, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1812) 1: iii.

5 William Beloe, *Miscellanies: Consisting of Poems, Classical Extracts, and Oriental Apologues*, 3 vols. (London, 1795). The Oriental tales are found in vol. 3.

same year, and several were reprinted elsewhere over the following decades.<sup>6</sup> They included the story of 'Basem, or the Blacksmith', which Marryat later plagiarized.

In his last will and testament, Patrick Russell ordered all his private papers to be burned; but his Oriental manuscripts he bequeathed to Claud's sons, who had also entered the service of the East India Company by this time. Sometime prior to 1840 they seem to have been sold. After at least three intermediate owners, a number of Russell's Oriental volumes ended up in the John Rylands Library in Manchester, where they are still kept.

Patrick Russell had a good reputation at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, but his fame faded dramatically in the decades after his death. Although recent publications tell us a great deal about his life and his scholarly and scientific significance, many questions remain about his Arabic manuscripts of the *Arabian Nights* and related stories. For example, it seems that multiple copies of the Russell manuscript(s) may have survived, but the connections between them are unclear. And although it is generally accepted that the first printed edition of the Arabic text of the *Arabian Nights*, the so-called Calcutta One edition, was based on the manuscript(s) Patrick Russell acquired in Aleppo sometime between 1750 and 1771, there are conflicting opinions about the actual chain of transmission.

## 1 Manuscripts

There are Arabic manuscripts in Manchester, London and Cambridge that are relevant to our inquiries. The most recently discovered volumes, in the Cambridge University Library, form two groups which will be discussed individually.

6 *The Freemason's Magazine*, April 1795, pp. 240-48; May 1795, pp. 326-33; June 1795, pp. 384-92; July 1795, pp. 37-43 ('Basem, or the Blacksmith'); August 1795, pp. 89-91 ('The Khalif and his Visier') September 1795, 187-93 ('The Man and the Genie', 'The Sultan and his Vizier, or the Sultan who received a Blow', 'The Cadi and the Man who had received a Blow' and 'The Pedant'). Several stories which Russell translated for Beloe were later reprinted both in England and in the United States. See, e.g., 'The Handsome Man and Ugly Wife', in *Spirit of the Public Journals for 1800*, ed. George and Robert Cruikshank, 21 vols. (London, 1801), 4: 148; 'The Cadi and the Man who had received a Blow', in *The Lady's Magazine; or, Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex*, 41 vols. (London, 1808), 39: 551; and 'The Sultan and his Vizier, or the Sultan who received a Blow', in both Daniel Adams, *The Understanding Reader* (Leicester, MA, 1803), pp. 170-73 (10th edition by 1821) and *Cincinnati Literary Gazette* 3, 1 (1825), pp. 1-2.

### 1.1 *The John Rylands Library*

There are six Arabic manuscripts of the *Arabian Nights* in the John Rylands Library in Manchester with a connection to Patrick Russell. The most important one, Rylands MS 647 [40], contains the first 140 complete Nights—the story of Night 141 is unfinished. At the front of the manuscript, the following owner's note is found: 'S.H. Lewin, 1827. £1.11s.6d. From the collection of Dr. Russell, author of the History of Aleppo.'<sup>7</sup> It has long been assumed that this is the first volume of the manuscript Russell brought home from Aleppo, the second volume being lost.

The other five shorter volumes, Rylands MS 649-53 [134-38], contain a mixture of Additional Nights, other popular stories and (animal) fables. Rylands MS 649 [134], for example, contains the story of the Merchant and the Jinni (fols. 3-29); 68 stories and fables, each of which is preceded by the word *shāhid* in red ink (fols. 31-103); and it ends (fols. 104-43) with the story of the daughter of King Khosrow. The middle section of this manuscript, with the 68 *shawāhid*, constitutes a separate textual unit, which is dedicated to a certain Muḥammad 'Alī Çelebi. By contrast, another volume from this group, Rylands MS 651 [136], offers only the two stories of Bāsim the Blacksmith (fols. 1-65) and of King Gala'ād [of India] and the philosopher Shīmās (fols. 66-157), both from the wider Nights corpus. Each of these five manuscripts bears the following note by Lewin: 'Bequeathed by Dr. P. Russell to Mr. C. Russell's sons, 1805.'

One peculiarity of the Russell manuscripts of these Additional Nights and other popular stories and fables is that some texts originate from Christian sources. This is clear, for example, for the Story of the Sparrow and the Hunter in Rylands MS 652 [137].<sup>8</sup> Instead of the Islamic *basmala* (*b-ismi-llāhi r-raḥ-māni r-raḥīm*), the story begins with the Christian Arabic phrase *b-ism al-abi wa l-ibni wa l-rūḥi l-qudusi al-ilāh al-wāḥid* and ends with the word 'Amen' (*āmīn*). Mingana already noticed this, suggesting that 'the scribe seems to have been a Christian, because at the beginning of some treatises he writes, perhaps inadvertently, the Christian formula.'<sup>9</sup> Mingana, however, classified the same handwriting in another manuscript as a 'clear European hand', suggesting that the text had been copied 'by or for Dr. Patrick Russell'.<sup>10</sup> Why Mingana thought that the Arabic handwriting of Rylands MS 647 [40] was European remains unclear, since the manuscript was without doubt produced in the Middle East. Whether or not the Christian Arabic phrases offer an indication of the scribe's

7 A. Mingana, *Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library, Manchester* (Manchester, 1934), pp. 887-90. On Lewin, see below.

8 For the digitized manuscript, see <<http://luna.manchester.ac.uk/luna/servlet/s/vofq50>>.

9 Mingana, *Catalogue*, p. 888.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 886.

religious background is impossible to say; after all, these stories also circulated among the non-Muslim populations of the Middle East, so the exemplar used for this particular copy might have come from that milieu. In any case, the link between these Manchester manuscripts and Patrick Russell is well documented.

### 1.2 *The British Library*

From the early twentieth century it was known that the British Library in London holds another relevant Arabic manuscript with a Russell connection, MS India Office Islamic 2699. It is commonly referred to as the Leyden manuscript, after John Leyden, its last owner before the volume entered the British Library.<sup>11</sup>

An examination of the Leyden manuscript allows us to reconstruct a small part of its history. The main text was written in black ink on glazed paper, with numerous fragments of poetry marked by Arabic headers reading *shiʿr* ('poetry') in red ink. Some lines of poetry are also adorned with small floral ornaments in the same colour.<sup>12</sup> The manuscript was clearly copied in a Middle Eastern hand. The Leyden volume does not have a colophon, but the cover provides an indication of a date *ante quem* for its production. At some point the manuscript was given a European leather binding. The paper used for the flyleaves has the watermark 'Golding & Snelgrove 1799'. The papermaking firm of John Golding and John Snelgrove, at Wookey Hole Mill, Somerset, was active from 1798 until 1819, when the partnership was dissolved.<sup>13</sup> This means that the Arabic text block must have been (re)bound around 1799 and almost certainly in England. There are no codicological signs that suggest that the volume had once consisted of two separate units which were only bound together at that date.

There is nothing in the manuscript that explicitly refers to Patrick Russell as a previous owner, nor do marginal notes point in his direction. Nevertheless, the Leyden manuscript volume contains 280 complete Nights, just like the two volumes Patrick Russell had acquired in Aleppo, as he mentioned in the second edition of *The Natural History of Aleppo*. The last Night in the manuscript, no. 281, starts on fol. 396v, but breaks off on fol. 398r. As we shall see below, it is the textual closeness between the Leyden manuscript and two other texts that firmly establishes the connection with Russell.

<sup>11</sup> On Leyden, see below.

<sup>12</sup> BL MS I.O. Islamic 2699, e.g., f. 125v.

<sup>13</sup> *The European Magazine* 75 (June 1819), p. 562: 'Dissolutions of partnership, from Saturday, May 29, to Tuesday, June 22, 1819.'

### 1.3 *Cambridge University Library (1)*

In 2013 an article was published by Mark Muehlhaeusler about the 'Chance bequest', which the Cambridge University Library received at the turn of the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup> The bequest, which consisted of 18 volumes of Oriental manuscripts (MSS Add. 3482-3499), was made by the physician and linguist Frank Chance. Muehlhaeusler focused on 14 volumes from the bequest which contain Additional Nights and popular stories.

Muehlhaeusler argues that these manuscripts once belonged to Patrick Russell on the basis of a comparison between the Arabic manuscripts and Russell's English translations as published by William Beloe in 1795.<sup>15</sup> The most extensive examination concerns the short story of the Silent Couple, for which Muehlhaeusler presents the Arabic from the Chance manuscript alongside Russell's translation. He also compares the Arabic manuscript story of Bāsim the Blacksmith with Russell's translation as published by Beloe, and with Carlo Landberg's edition published in 1888. Both stories are found in MS Add. 3498. Muehlhaeusler concludes that Russell's translations closely correspond to the Arabic text in the Cambridge manuscript, while Landberg's sources differ from it substantially.

On the basis of the analysis of two stories in a single manuscript from the Chance bequest, Muehlhaeusler writes: 'I think one can argue that the Cambridge manuscripts in the Chance bequest are those Russell brought with him from Aleppo in 1772.'<sup>16</sup>

There is reason to doubt that all the Arabic manuscripts in the Chance bequest could have been brought back to Britain by Patrick Russell. According to E.G. Browne's *Hand List*, Cambridge MS Add. 3483, for instance, was transcribed in Hasköy in 1226 AH. There are at least five locations in Turkey called Hasköy, but the quarter of Beyoğlu in Istanbul seems the most likely candidate, because it was where most Westerners lived in the city. Russell never lived there, but he may well have visited the Ottoman capital when he was a ship's surgeon in the Eastern Mediterranean prior to settling in Aleppo.<sup>17</sup> The year

14 M. Muehlhaeusler, 'Oriental Tales in 18th-Century Manuscripts ... and in English Translation', *Middle Eastern Literatures*, 16.2 (2013), 189-202.

15 William Beloe, *Miscellanies: Consisting of Poems, Classical Extracts, and Oriental Apologies*, 3 vols. (London, 1795).

16 Muehlhaeusler, 'Oriental Tales', p. 194.

17 A document in the Delmé Radcliffe collection at the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies lists Patrick Russell as the ship's surgeon of the *Delaware*; HALS DE/R/B387/39: 'The Ship's Articles of the Officers and Crew bound for Turkey on 22 July 1746 and then to Leghorn on behalf of Edward and Arthur Radcliffe, John Jolly commanding.' See: <[https://www.hertsmemories.org.uk/content/herts-history/leisure/threads\\_of\\_time/the\\_threads\\_of\\_time\\_exhibition/a\\_doctor\\_at\\_sea-2](https://www.hertsmemories.org.uk/content/herts-history/leisure/threads_of_time/the_threads_of_time_exhibition/a_doctor_at_sea-2)>. Cf. van den Boogert, *Aleppo Observed*, p. 174.

1226, in which the manuscript was produced, however, corresponds to 1811 CE, by which time Russell had already died. Likewise, Browne specifies that MS Add. 3487 is dated 1272 AH/1855-56 CE. If this is correct, then both manuscripts were produced after Russell's death in 1805 and therefore cannot have been acquired by him. No textual evidence from either manuscript is used in Muehlhaeusler's article, so the two dates do not undermine all of his arguments, but the Chance bequest evidently did not entirely 'hail from the same source'.<sup>18</sup>

Muehlhaeusler acknowledges the possibility that the Chance collection consists of direct copies of Patrick Russell's manuscripts, but

against such doubt I would hold the argument that the manuscripts do not bear the characteristics of European copies; although certainly quite clean in appearance for folk literature, the paper and style of writing do seem to be genuinely Syrian.

Muehlhaeusler believed he had put 'an end to the long-standing mystery of the whereabouts of Russell's manuscripts',<sup>19</sup> but he was evidently unaware of the collection of Russell manuscripts in the John Rylands Library in Manchester. A comparison between his list of Chance manuscripts with Mingana's *Catalogue* of the Manchester collection suggests that there is some overlap. Two of the twelve remaining Chance manuscripts have no corresponding Arabic texts in the Rylands Library; any evidence that they were connected to Russell is lacking. The contents of the remaining ten Cambridge manuscripts is similar to some extent to that of the relevant volumes in Manchester (see the Appendix below), but it seems too early to draw any conclusions. Muehlhaeusler's research suggests that a closer comparison between Cambridge Add. 3498, Russell's translated stories as published by Beloe, and Rylands 649 [134] would be fruitful. So perhaps one Chance manuscript was indeed brought back to England by Russell.

#### 1.4 *Cambridge University Library (2)*

Recently Luca Koronli, a PhD student in Cambridge, has discovered two additional volumes of *Arabian Nights* stories with a link to Patrick Russell. MSS Or. 1762 and 1763 in the Cambridge University Library together contain 282 Nights. In 1956 the two volumes were presented to the Library by the Trustees of the E.G. Browne Fund, having been bought from one Mrs Newman, The Old

<sup>18</sup> Muehlhaeusler, 'Oriental Tales', p. 189.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.



Vicarage, Broomfield.<sup>20</sup> This may have been Maureen Newman, née Graham, the second wife of Rev. Roland Alan Webb Newman (1878-1958), who lived in the Old Vicarage, Broomfield, Bridgwater, from 1954.<sup>21</sup> Even if this identification is correct, it remains unclear how she came to own these Arabic manuscripts. Was it perhaps her late husband who had been interested in Oriental literature? Or had the manuscripts simply been curious objects that had adorned the family's book shelves? In any case, there is evidence that the two manuscripts did once belong to Patrick Russell, because Or. 1762 contains the following note on one of the flyleaves:

Arabian Nights  
283 First Nights

The above is Dr. Patrick Russell's Autograph. He mentions this MS in his *Natural History of Aleppo*, vol. 1, p. 251.

The title and the number of nights were possibly written by Patrick Russell. The second note was signed by S.H. Lewin and dated 1827.<sup>22</sup> Lewin's bibliographical note refers to the following lines in the second edition of the *Natural History of Aleppo*:

The Arabian Nights Entertainments, known in England, were hardly to be found at Aleppo. A manuscript containing two hundred and eight [sic!] nights, was the only one I met with, and, as a particular favour, procured liberty to have a copy taken from it. This copy was circulated successively to more than a score of Harems, and I was assured by some of the Ullama, whom the women had sometimes induced to be of the audience, that till then they were ignorant that such a book existed.<sup>23</sup>

In one of the endnotes to the second edition Patrick Russell provides us with the following information about the manuscript he brought home:

The Arabic title of our Arabian Nights is 'Hakaiat Elf Leily wa Leily', Stories, a thousand and one nights. It is a scarce book at Aleppo. After much

<sup>20</sup> I owe this information to Luca Koronli.

<sup>21</sup> <<http://www.newman-family-tree.net/Rowland-A-W-Newman.html>>.

<sup>22</sup> The same year in which Lewin acquired Rylands MS 647 [40]. Lewin paid £3:3:- for Cambridge Or. 1762.

<sup>23</sup> Alexander Russell, *The Natural History of Aleppo*

enquiry, I found only two volumes, containing two hundred and eighty nights, and with difficulty obtained liberty to have a copy taken.<sup>24</sup>

Assuming that Russell's manuscript contained 280 Nights (the eight in the first quotation above must be a typo), it is noteworthy that the Cambridge manuscripts discovered by Koronli actually contain 282 Nights, that is, one fewer than the note on the flyleaves suggests—but two more than Russell mentions.<sup>25</sup>

### 1.5 *A Lost Volume? The Jones Manuscript*

Before we attempt to create some order in the expanding corpus of *Arabian Nights* manuscripts with a link to Patrick Russell, there is one other text, now assumed lost, that deserves to be mentioned. In 1772 Sir William Jones owned an Arabic manuscript of the *Arabian Nights*. When Hendrik Albert Schultens visited Jones at Oxford, the Dutch Orientalist was shown

several manuscripts, mostly Persian, some Arabic. These included two copies of the Qur'an both produced in the East Indies. [Also] a copy of the night recitations, which he had copied in Aleppo. He also mentions it in the Preface to his *Poems*.<sup>26</sup>

In his Preface Jones referred to this volume as 'the Arabian tales of a thousand and one nights, a copy of which work in Arabick was procured for me by a learned friend at Aleppo.'<sup>27</sup> Contrary to Beveridge's reply to MacDonald, Jones therefore does appear to have owned the manuscript—not borrowed it from Joseph White, the Professor of Arabic at Oxford, whose Arabic text was a copy of the Wortley Montagu manuscript from the Egyptian redaction.<sup>28</sup>

24 Ibid., 1: 385-86: Endnote xxxviii.

25 A note in Arabic on the title-page that speaks of 282 (*mi'atān wa-ithnān wa-thamānūn*) Nights is therefore correct.

26 C. van Eekeren and E. Kwant (eds), 'Een alleraangenaamste reys. H.A. Schultens 1772-1773', [Appendix]: '30 september [1772] bij Mr. Jones: 'Verscheijde mss gezien, meest Persiaansche, eenige Arabische. Onder dezelve 2 exemplaren van de *Coran* beijde in Oostindien geschreeven. Een exemplaar van de nagtvertellingen, die hij te Aleppo heeft laten afschrijven. Hier van maakt hij ook gewag in de voorreede van zijne *Poems*.' This is an unpublished edition of Schultens's private diary which he kept during the trip and of his letters to his father written from England. The original is Leiden University Library, MS BPL 245 (viii).

27 William Jones, *Poems, Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages* (Oxford, 1772), p. xi.

28 H. Beveridge, 'A Supposed Missing MS. of the Arabian Nights', *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 45:1 (1913), 170-171; L. Châtel, 'Re-Orienting William Beckford: Transmission, Translation, and Continuation of *The Thousand and One*

D.B. MacDonald already established that Nathaniel Bland bought the Jones manuscript at auction from Lady Jones's estate on 10 May 1831, but it was not included in the Oriental volumes which were eventually purchased from Bland's estate by the Earl of Crawford and which now form the nucleus of the Rylands collection. According to the auction catalogue, it was a quarto-size book, two volumes bound in one, containing 222 Nights.

Unfortunately, Jones's manuscript of the *Arabian Nights* seems to have been lost, but an excerpt from it survives in printed form both in Arabic and in an English translation. The text, al-Nashshar the Barber's Tale of his Fifth Brother, was the 162nd/163rd Night in the Jones manuscript. John Richardson borrowed the manuscript from Jones and published the story in his *Grammar of the Arabic Language* (London, 1776).<sup>29</sup>

It is tempting to assume that the 'learned friend at Aleppo' was Patrick Russell, because we know that Jones had been in contact with his older half-brother, Alexander Russell (d. 1768), and had borrowed Arabic manuscripts from him.<sup>30</sup> But the way Russell referred to Richardson's manuscript suggests that he knew little about it:

The MS. from which Mr. Richardson translated the story of Alnaschar, must, like mine, have wanted the story of Sindbad, the story of Alnaschar beginning in both MSS. in the 162<sup>d</sup> Night.<sup>31</sup>

If it was indeed Patrick Russell who had supplied Jones with the manuscript that Richardson worked with later—and there were precious few other friends of Jones in Aleppo whom he might have considered learned—then Russell had evidently not had a very close look at it before sending it from Syria to England.

## 2 Provenances

For the reconstruction of historical manuscript collections it is important to establish as many links in the chain of ownership as possible. With regard to the Russell manuscripts of the *Arabian Nights*, three owners in particular are worth discussing in some detail.

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*Nights*', in *Scheherazade's Children: Global Encounters with the Arabian Nights*, ed. P.F. Kennedy and Marina Warner (New York, 2013), pp. 53-69, esp. 56-8.

29 The Arabic text with English translation are found there on pp. 200-209.

30 See n. 52 below.

31 'On the Authenticity of the Arabian Tales, by Dr. Russell', *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 69 (February 1799), pp. 91-2.

### 2.1 *Samuel Hawtayne Lewin*

Without exception the Rylands manuscripts once belonged to S.H. Lewin, who may have bought them directly from Russell's heirs. He was certainly aware of the chain of ownership of these volumes, because each of the Supplementary Nights has the inscription 'Bequeathed by Dr. P. Russell to Mr. C. Russell's sons, 1805'. In another manuscript Lewin recorded that it originated 'from the collection of Dr Russell, author of the History of Aleppo'.<sup>32</sup>

Samuel Hawtayne Lewin (1795-1840) was the son of Samuel Lewin, of the Six Clerks' Office in Chancery Lane, and Alice Nunes, who seem to have lived in Hackney when he was born. It is not clear where he was educated. Lewin eventually married Mary Peene and they had two sons and one daughter, all of whom were baptized at St George's, the Parish Church of Bloomsbury, London. The family lived in a house on Woburn Square, where Lewin died on 19 October 1840 at the age of 44.<sup>33</sup> Little is known about Lewin's professional career, except that he succeeded his father as one of the six sworn clerks of the Court of Chancery. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society in 1829.<sup>34</sup>

Over the years Lewin acquired an impressive collection of Oriental manuscripts from a variety of sources. The Russell manuscripts he may have purchased directly from Patrick's heirs, or from an unknown intermediate owner. He acquired some other Arabic manuscripts while travelling on the continent, buying them from the estates of French and Spanish scholars. Lewin may also have obtained Middle Eastern manuscripts through his brother-in-law, the politician, diplomat, and writer, (Sir) John Bowring, who was in Egypt in 1838.<sup>35</sup> Lewin often added notes to his Arabic manuscripts about their contents, sometimes even correcting mistakes made by previous owners, but it remains unclear whether he had learned some Arabic or was working with more accurate catalogues than were available before.

In addition to his Arabic volumes, Lewin acquired at auction several Zoroastrian manuscripts which had originally been collected by Samuel Guise from

32 Mingana, *Catalogue*, p. 886, also p. 1034 (Rylands MS 775 [47]).

33 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 14 (November 1840), p. 554 (Obituaries).

34 See <<http://52.16.98.183/webtrees/individual.php?pid=11047&ged=Tolliss>> for all genealogical information about Lewin. *The Gentleman's Magazine* reported in 1835 (January issue, p. 106) that 'Samuel Hawtayne Lewin, Esq. of Loose, Kent' had died in Westminster on 13 December 1834. This must be a mistake. Lewin's wife, Mary Peene, was indeed from Loose, Kent, but no member of the family is known to have died there around this date.

35 An autograph letter by Bowring to Joseph Hume dated 23 January, 1838, from Upper Egypt, was offered (as Lot 405) at auction in London on 27 September 2017. <<https://www.the-saleroom.com/en-us/auction-catalogues/forumauctions/catalogue-id-forum-10069/lot-43858288-4db1-485c-81d7-a7e0012e474e>>.

the estate of the Persian scholar John Haddon Hindley (d. 1827),<sup>36</sup> and he also owned Nepalese and Sanskrit manuscripts.<sup>37</sup> Lewin's manuscript collection is not mentioned in his will, in which he left his estate to his wife and other family members.<sup>38</sup> It seems likely that the heirs sold Lewin's manuscripts, probably at auction. Several of the Russell manuscripts from Lewin's collection were acquired by the Persian scholar Nathaniel Bland (formerly Crumpe, d. 1865) at some point.<sup>39</sup> Bland's collection was subsequently bought by Alexander Lindsay, 25th Earl of Crawford, whose 'Bibliotheca Lindesiana' Mrs. Rylands acquired for Manchester in 1901.

## 2.2 *John Leyden*

The Arabic manuscript of *A Thousand and One Nights* in the British Library once belonged to John Leyden (1775-1811), a Scottish scholar with a great interest in folklore and story-telling. From an early age he enjoyed reading English translations of stories from the *Arabian Nights*. His parents envisaged a clerical career for him, so Leyden began to study theology at Edinburgh University. He soon added courses in natural history, and by 1794 he had also made great progress with Hebrew and Arabic. Having completed his theological studies, Leyden was unable to find a clerical position. He began to consider going abroad, perhaps to Africa, but his friends procured for him a position with the East India Company instead. The only available position being that of Assistant Surgeon, Leyden spent another year at university shoring up his medical knowledge. On his way to India he spent the first three months of 1803 in Oxford and London, before embarking for Madras in April. After having stayed in Madras and Mysore, Leyden arrived in Calcutta in February 1806 and was elected Professor of Hindustani languages in the spring of 1807. His later career in India included a position at Fort William College, and in 1811 he joined an expedition to British-occupied Java, where he died on 28 August.<sup>40</sup>

36 U. Sims-Williams, 'The Strange Story of Samuel Guise: An 18th-Century Collection of Zoroastrian Manuscripts', *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* New Series, 19 (2005), 199-209, esp. 204; *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 5 (1839), p. xix.

37 Mingana, *Catalogue*, identified the following Arabic MSS in the John Rylands Library as having once belonged to S.H. Lewin: 6; 47; 57; 76C; 134; 136; 147; 234; 235; 248; 252; 255; 259; 263; 264-5; 266; 281; 284; 312; 319 [?]; 343; 455; 459; 467; 473; 476; 486; 501-536; 543-51; 647; 653; 657; 671; 676; 707; 715; 773; 775; 777; and 779.

38 PROB 11/1936/206: Will of Samuel Hawtayne Lewin of Woburn Square, Middlesex, 3 September 1840.

39 Sims-Williams, 'The Strange Story of Samuel Guise', p. 204.

40 John Reith, *Life of Dr. John Leyden, Poet and Linguist* (Galashiels, 1947), pp. 9-10; James Morton ed., *The Poetical Remains of the late Dr. John Leyden: with Memoirs of his Life* (London, 1819).

In 1803, three years before Leyden arrived in Calcutta, someone called 'Alī Shākir (or Shakir Ulee) was already preparing a 300-page work in quarto called *Alf lailah* (or *Ulife Luelu*) for the press of Fort William College in Calcutta. It is not clear whether the work was ever actually published, but it was obviously based on the *Arabian Nights*. The planned publication is evidence of an early interest in these stories at Fort William College, the most important British colonial teaching institution in India, where the first major edition of the Arabic text of the *Nights* would be published some years later.

### 2.3 *Frank Chance*

The benefactor behind the Chance bequest was Frank Chance.<sup>41</sup> Born at Highgate on 22 June 1826, Chance's working life started in the glass factory owned by his father, Robert Lucas Chance, who had moved his business from Birmingham to London in 1815 and who founded Chance Glass Works (later Chance Brothers & Co.) in 1828. After two years in the family business, Frank Chance studied medicine at King's College, London, and then spent one year in Paris, followed by another in Berlin. In 1850 he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, taking his bachelor's degree in both the Arts and Medicine in 1854 and the M.B. in 1855, having done his clinical training at St Bartholomew's Hospital in the City of London. In the 1860s he worked as a physician at London's Blenheim Street Free Dispensary and Infirmary. After having been a Licentiate for some time, Chance was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Physicians in 1863. Two years later he retired from medical practice, after his father's death on 7 March, the inheritance making Chance financially independent.

In the early 1870s Chance's brief correspondence with Charles Darwin shows that he had both scientific and scholarly interests,<sup>42</sup> but it was only in the latter domain that his work left durable traces. At Cambridge, Chance had obtained the Tyrwhitt Hebrew scholarship, an indication of his interest in foreign languages. From 1875 to 1884, he was a member of the committee for the Revised Version of the Old Testament. Chance was a gifted linguist who spoke German, French and Italian fluently. According to his obituary, 'the study of languages was for him a pastime', but he also rendered science great services. For example, he translated the second edition of Rudolf Virchow's *Die Cellularpathologie*, a fundamental text about pathology, into English.<sup>43</sup> His greatest

41 See Muehlhaeusler, 'Oriental Tales', pp. 189-90, for a short biographical note.

42 Frank Chance to Charles Darwin, before 25 April 1871 and 31 July-7 August 1873; Darwin to Chance, 10 August 1873, all on the subject of pigment in human and animal hair; see the Darwin Correspondence Project, <<https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/frank-chance>>.

43 Rudolf Virchow, *Die Cellularpathologie in ihrer Begründung auf physiologische und pathologische Gewebelehre* (Berlin, 1858<sup>1</sup>); Rudolf Virchow, *Cellular Pathology. As Based*

scholarly achievement was the publication of Hermann Bernard's new translation of the Book of Job, which the author had been unable to finish before his death. Chance edited and revised the work extensively, adding copious notes.<sup>44</sup> This work reportedly exerted such a strain on Chance that it had a permanent negative effect on his health. He never published a second volume of notes, with which he is believed to have made great progress at the time of his death.

On 12 August 1857 Chance had married Jane Susan Katherine Brewster, who predeceased him in 1889. They had one daughter, Gertrude Louisa Emma Chance, who married Armand François Maurice Georges Duault, an artillery officer in the French Army, who was eventually stationed in Nice, France. It was at their house that Chance, who lived in Burleigh House, Sydenham Hill in Surrey by this time, died on 1 July 1897. He was buried at the Ladywell and Brockely Cemetry in London in the same grave as his wife.<sup>45</sup>

Chance left his entire estate to his daughter. The estate included Chance's 'library of books', which, in case she decided to sell them, 'shall be sold in London'. Clause 11 of the will stipulated that

I give to the University of Cambridge such books in my Library as the Librarian of the said University or any person to be appointed by him shall with the consent of my said daughter select within twelve calendar months after my decease.<sup>46</sup>

According to Muehlhausler, Chance had acquired the entire group of Cambridge manuscripts in the summer of 1862, but it is not clear from whom.<sup>47</sup> This lengthy gap in the chain of transmission does not help to ascertain how these Cambridge manuscripts might be connected to the larger corpus of Russell manuscripts.

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*Upon Physiological and Pathological Histology. Twenty Lectures Delivered in the Pathological Institute of Berlin During the Months of February, March and April, 1858*, trans. Frank Chance (London, 1860). It was on the strength of this translation that he was elected F.R.C.P.

44 Herman Hedwig Bernard, *The Book of Job, as expounded to his Cambridge Pupils by the late Hermann Hedwig Bernard*, ed. and trans. Frank Chance (London, 1864).

45 G.H. Brown, *Munk's Roll*, 4 vols. (London, 1955), 4: 134. For a short announcement of Chance's death, see *Notes & Queries* 8th S. XII, 10 July 1897, p. 40. For the obituary, which includes the entire obituary published in the *Times* on 29 July 1897, see *Notes & Queries*, 8th S., XII, 14 August 1897, p. 121.

46 *Last Will and Testament of Frank Chance Esq.*, Prob. London, 28 October 1897, fol. 1076.

47 Muehlhaeusler, 'Oriental Tales', pp. 190, 194. There is no reference to the source for this information.

### 3 Genealogy

We now know of Russell manuscripts of the *Arabian Nights* in three libraries. Firstly, there is the John Rylands library in Manchester, where manuscripts of both the canonical stories of the *Arabian Nights* as well volumes with supplementary tales are kept; secondly, the Cambridge University Library, where the volumes of Additional Nights and other popular stories from the Chance bequest are kept and where Luca Koronli recently also found two Arabic volumes containing 280 'canonical' Nights in total; and thirdly, the British Library, which holds the Leyden manuscript, with some 280 'canonical' stories. Although the corpus of Russell manuscripts has thus recently expanded, the question of how they relate to one another tends to focus on the 'canonical' stories alone, so the Additional Nights or supplementary tales will be left out of the discussion that follows.

The Arabic Russell manuscripts have several things in common. Most importantly, all were produced in the Islamic world by Ottoman scribes. None of the manuscripts are dated, which does not help to ascertain in which order they might have been produced. There is also considerable overlap in the contents of the manuscripts. This suggests that Patrick Russell had had multiple copies made of the *Arabian Nights* manuscripts he had obtained in Aleppo.

Russell unquestionably had first-hand knowledge of the process of manuscript copying, which few other European observers tended to include in their travel accounts. In the second edition of *The Natural History of Aleppo*, he inserted the following account of it:

The expense of copying manuscripts is very considerable, though the Scribes earn little more by that kind of labour, than a scanty maintenance. The paper in common use is imported from France and Italy, and is glazed at Aleppo. Their ink is almost as thick as printing ink, and their ordinary pens are of reeds, of a dark reddish colour, somewhat thicker than the common reed.

When a manuscript of any consequence is finished, it is usual to invite a certain number of Sheihs and Effendees to be present at the reading of it. Each person comes provided with a copy of the book to be collated, together with a standish and a pipe, and, while one reads the new codex aloud, the others keep their eyes attentively fixed on their respective manuscripts. Slight mistakes, or omissions in punctuation, are quickly corrected in going along, without interrupting the reader; but when more important errors, or various readings happen to occur, they lay down their books, refresh their pipes, and deliberately proceed to consider the



matter. On such occasions, the debates and digressions are apt to run out to a great length, so that the main business which brought the company together, very often advances slowly.<sup>48</sup>

Elsewhere Russell added that not all texts were copied so scrupulously, however:

I suspect therefore, that this last circumstance [i.e., the introduction of stories not found in Russell's manuscripts], as well as some introduced by way of amplifications in other places, to be modern additions; and this is rather, from having remarked that, *in copies made from my own MS*, the scribes were little scrupulous in abridging descriptions, changing words, and adding decorations, as fancy happened to lead; a license not assumed in MSS. of serious import, which are always carefully compared and corrected.<sup>49</sup>

This removes any doubt about the authenticity of the various copies that have recently been connected with Russell and confirms that he had copies made from his own 'original' copy in Aleppo.

### 3.1 *Family Tree*

Efforts to determine how various versions of the Arabic texts of the *Arabian Nights* related to one another already started in the eighteenth century. This line of inquiry was (and often still is) limited to those Arabic manuscripts that contain stories from the core corpus of *A Thousand and One Nights*. Manuscripts of Additional Nights, including the Chance MSS, are thus not part of this discussion.

Patrick Russell himself already made a comparison between his own manuscript and Galland's French translation; this was published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1799. Based also on the order of the stories, Russell came to the conclusion that 'there seems no ground to doubt that M. Galland translated from a copy similar to the MS. in my possession'.<sup>50</sup>

It is now clear that Patrick Russell owned multiple copies of the Arabic texts of the *Arabian Nights*, both of the first c. 280 'canonical' stories and of the supplementary tales and fables. Yet in his letter of 1799 he consistently speaks of

48 Alexander Russell, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, ed. Patrick Russell, 2 vols. (London, 1794), 2: 95.

49 'On the Authenticity of the Arabian Tales', p. 92 (my emphasis). I am grateful to Arnoud Vrolijk for pointing out the significance of this passage.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 91.

his manuscript in the singular. Does that mean that by this time he had disposed of the other copies of the *Arabian Nights* stories he had once owned? Or was he simply referring to the first copy he had had taken in Aleppo, and from which other copies had later been made there? The latter seems more plausible.

S.H. Lewin, who may well have been the first owner of the Russell manuscripts outside the Russell family, was also interested in the relationship between the various manuscripts. On the title-page of what is now Cambridge Or. 1762 he wrote that the volume was 'Dr. Patrick Russell's Autograph'. Lewin acquired the manuscript in 1827, the same year in which he also purchased what is now Rylands MS 647 [40]. Curiously, Lewin considered that manuscript as 'Dr. R.'s Autograph' too.

The word 'autograph' suggests that Russell had personally copied the text in his own hand, and Lewin may well have believed that this was the case. Russell, however, explicitly denied being able to write Arabic. In a letter he wrote from Aleppo to the Professor of Oriental Languages in Leiden, Jan Jacob Schultens, dated 27 February 1766, Russell explains that, enclosed in his own English letter, was a letter in Arabic. The Arabic letter had been written for Schultens's benefit by the learned 'Effendee' who helped Russell procure manuscripts in Aleppo. Russell explicitly mentions him in the letter to Leiden 'to prevent your thinking me so deeply skilled in the Arabic myself as to be able to write the Language or to judge of Manuscripts'.<sup>51</sup> Although the Arabic letter was signed 'Pātrik Rūsīl', it is therefore clear that the unnamed Efendi had actually written it.

In the early twentieth century another attempt was made to establish a 'genealogical tree of MSS' by Duncan B. MacDonald. By this time the focus had shifted from a comparison of manuscripts with that of Galland and his translation; now scholars wanted to find the text on which the Calcutta One edition (1814-1818) had been based. In September 1914 MacDonald visited the Rylands Library in Manchester in search of MS Arabic 706, a sixteenth-century text that turned out to have been owned (and added to) by French Orientalists. The

<sup>51</sup> Russell to Schultens, Leiden University Library, MS BPL 245: A/Russell. See also M.H. van den Boogert, 'Patrick Russell and the Republic of Letters in Aleppo', in *The Republic of Letters and the Levant*, ed. A. Hamilton et al. (Leiden, 2005), pp. 223-64, esp. 241. Other scholars did copy Arabic manuscripts in their own hand. See, e.g., Rylands MSS 264-265 [94-95], the copy produced by William Jones of the *Sukkardān al-Sulṭān* from an original manuscript acquired by Alexander Russell, Patrick's older half-brother, in Aleppo. Jones finished the first volume in December 1766 and the second a year later; see Mingana, *Catalogue*, pp. 426-8: 'The Arabic writing of Sr. W. Jones is a bold, legible, but not handsome Naskhi.'

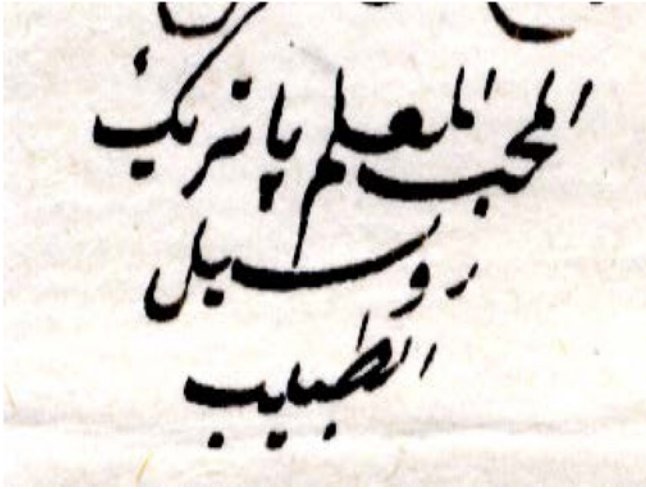


FIGURE 15.1  
Signature of the  
Arabic letter  
addressed to  
Professor Schultens  
in Leiden and signed  
(on behalf of)  
*al-muḥibb al-*  
*mu'allim Pātrik Rūsīl*  
*aṭ-ṭabīb*. Detail from  
Leiden University  
Library, MS BPL 245:  
A/Russell

manuscript was not what MacDonald was looking for; but, to his surprise, he then found MS Arabic 647 [40], the text of which he compared with the Leyden manuscript in the British Library as well as the printed Calcutta One edition.<sup>52</sup> MacDonald only published his findings in an article in 1922. He came to the conclusion that 'we have ... three witnesses for a practically identical text'. According to him:

there can be no doubt that these three are connected and there can be no reasonable doubt that the Russell MS is the source of the other two. But exactly how, where and when these two were derived from the Russell MS is not easy to decide.<sup>53</sup>

In MacDonald's view, both Rylands MS 647 [40] and the lost Jones manuscript were 'descendants' of Galland's manuscript.<sup>54</sup>

In his seminal work on the *Thousand and One Nights*, Muhsin Mahdi agreed with MacDonald that the Calcutta One edition 'is derived indirectly from the Russell manuscript', that is, Ryland MS 647 [40].<sup>55</sup> According to Mahdi:

<sup>52</sup> D .B. Macdonald to 'Sir' [presumably the curator of the Oriental manuscripts at the Rylands Library], dated 4 October 1914, sent from Hartford, Connecticut, USA. The letter was pasted in the back of Rylands MS 647, the former MS Arabic 40 Macdonald referred to, and was digitized with it.

<sup>53</sup> MacDonald, 'A Preliminary Classification', p. 313.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 307.

<sup>55</sup> M. Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights (Alf Layla wa-Layla): From the Earliest Known*

the intermediary, if not the immediate, manuscript used by the editor [of Calcutta One] appears to have been the John Leyden (1775-1811) manuscript, copied from Russell's in India shortly before Leyden's death in Java in 1811.<sup>56</sup>

This is incorrect, because, as MacDonald had already pointed out, Leyden and Russell could not have met in India; Patrick Russell was there between August 1782 and January 1787, while Leyden did not arrive in India until August 1803.<sup>57</sup> MacDonald rightly suggested that they must have met instead in London, where Russell lived and Leyden was staying during the months prior to his departure for Madras in April 1803.<sup>58</sup> Both Leyden and Russell were Scots, they shared an interest in Arabic and Russell had already been in India. It therefore seems highly likely that mutual friends introduced Leyden to Russell in that period.

No doubt following Mahdi's lead, Ulrich Marzolph and Richard van Leeuwen have suggested that the Calcutta One edition of the *Arabian Nights* 'contains a part of the Russell manuscript as copied by John Leyden'.<sup>59</sup> The explicit identification of Leyden himself as the copyist is certainly erroneous, because the Leyden manuscript was copied neither in Britain nor South Asia, but in the Middle East.

Which manuscript was the exemplar for the other copies cannot be determined with any certainty; consequently, only a hypothesis can be advanced here. The Jones manuscript cannot be positively identified as belonging to the Russell manuscripts, so it is not a candidate. That leaves the Rylands manuscript, the two Cambridge volumes and the Leyden manuscript. The simple fact that Cambridge Or. 1762 and Or. 1763 together contain 282 Nights makes them the most likely exemplar for the other copies, because the Leyden

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Sources. *Arabic Text edited with Introduction and Notes*, vol. 3: *Introduction and Indexes, Part 3* (Leiden, 1994), pp. 88-92.

56 Ibid., p. 91.

57 M.H. van den Boogert, *Aleppo Observed. Ottoman Syria Through the Eyes of Two Scottish Doctors, Alexander and Patrick Russell* (Oxford, 2010); J. Reith, *Life of Dr. John Leyden, Poet and Linguist* (Galashiels, 1947).

58 MacDonald, 'A Preliminary Classification', p. 313.

59 U. Marzolph and R. van Leeuwen, *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 2 vols. (Santa Barbara, CA, 2004), 1: 545. See the review of J. Scott's *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*, which claimed that 'there are several copies [of Russell's manuscript] in the European libraries, several of which are *probably transcripts made in Europe*' (my emphasis), in *American Quarterly Review*, 6.12 (1829), 283-303.

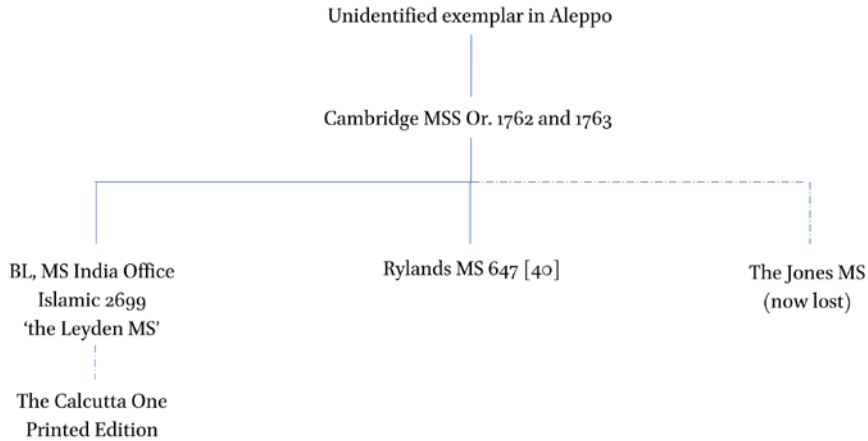


FIGURE 15.2 Tentative genealogical tree of the Russell group of Arabic manuscripts of the *Arabian Nights*.

volume breaks off in the course of Night 281, and it seems improbable that a copy would have contained more complete Nights than the exemplar. The only complication is the fact that Rylands MS 647 [40] is also incomplete, as it breaks off during Night 141 and its second volume is missing. If its second volume were ever found, this manuscript might prove to be the most complete. But until then, the working hypothesis should be that Cambridge Or. 1762 and Or. 1763 formed the exemplar from which the Leyden manuscript, the Rylands volume and perhaps also the Jones manuscript were copied in Aleppo (see Fig. 15.2).

That leaves the question of the exemplar of the Calcutta One edition. Leyden's appointment at Fort William College in Calcutta, where the edition would later be printed, certainly gave him the means and the opportunity to pass on his manuscript to his institute's press. This would also explain why it is now part of the India Office collection in the British Library. In fact, the Leyden manuscript is the *only* Russell manuscript that can plausibly be connected with the efforts to print the Arabic text of the *Arabian Nights* in Calcutta. Although circumstantial evidence of this kind remains unsatisfactory, even a close textual comparison between the Leyden manuscript and the Calcutta One edition will probably not be conclusive. This is because, according to Shaykh Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Shīrwānī al-Yamānī, the editor of the Calcutta One edition, the manuscript he was working with had originally been copied by a Syrian scribe with the aim of facilitating the teaching of spoken Arabic. For this reason, Shaykh Aḥmad—unlike Richardson in the eighteenth

century<sup>60</sup>—decided to remove all traces of Syrian Arabic from the text, in the process of which he made additional editorial interventions.<sup>61</sup> These changes alone will make it impossible to find a perfect match between any potential manuscript source and the first printed edition of the *Arabian Nights*.

### Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Arnoud Vrolijk (Leiden University) for sharing original documents at his disposal, for correcting my Arabic and reading various draft versions of this article. I am also grateful to Luca Koronli (Cambridge University) for sharing scans of the Cambridge manuscripts with me and for reading an earlier version of this article, and to Elizabeth Gow, curator and archivist at the John Rylands Library (Manchester), for helping me to get access to the digitized Russell manuscripts on the library's website: <<http://luna.manchester.ac.uk/luna/servlet/allCollections>>. All websites referred to in this article were consulted on 22 March 2019.

### Appendix

A comparison of the stories in the manuscripts of the Chance bequest, Cambridge University Library, with those in the John Rylands Library, Manchester

Chance Bequest	John Rylands Library	Remarks
Add. 3483 (fol. 44): <i>Ḥikāyāt khwāja Naṣr al-Dīn</i> [i.e. Nasreddin Hoca]	–	Dated 1226/1811
Add. 3484 (fol. 15): fol. 2b.: <i>Ḥadīth al-ʿajūzayn fī Banī Isrāʾīl</i> fols. 3–15: <i>Ḥikāyat Faḍlūn al-ʿābid</i>	–	

60 See Richardson's explanation of 'vulgarisms' in John Richardson, *A Grammar of the Arabick Language. In which the Rules are illustrated by the Authorities of the Best Writers; principally adapted for the Service of the Honourable East India Company* (London, 1776), p. 200, footnote to line 1.

61 Mahdi, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 3: 91.

Chance Bequest	John Rylands Library	Remarks
Add. 3485 (fol. 52): <i>Qiṣṣat al-malik Kal'ād wa-mā jarā lahu ma'a wazīrihi Shīmās</i>	651 [136] (fols. 66–157): <i>Khabar al-malik Kal'ād ma'a al-ḥakīm Shīmās wa-mā jarā lahum bi-l-bayān</i>	Rylands 651 [136] also includes Bāsim the Blacksmith
Add. 3487 (fol. 190): <i>Qiṣṣat Muṣṭafā Bīq-Zāda</i> <i>Qiṣṣat Tuḥfat al-Ṣudūr ma'a al-khalīfa</i>	— —	Dated 1272/1855–6
Add. 3489 (fols. 71): fols. 1–42: <i>al-Tājir wa-l-jinnī</i>	649 [134] (fols. 3–29): The Merchant and the Jinni	
fols. 43–71: <i>al-Shāṭir Aḥmad al-Danaf al-Khalīfa Hārūn al-Rashīd wa l-ṣayyād</i>	652 [137]: fols. 106–25: <i>Ḥikāyat al-Shāṭir Aḥmad al-Dalaf</i> [sic]	
Add. 3490 (fol. 22): <i>Ibn al-malik wa-mā jarā lahu ma'a bint al-malik wa-tarjumānatiḥā</i>	652 [137] (fols. 2–16): <i>Khabar al-Qahramāna wa-l-tarjumāna wa-l-shābb Ibn al-Malik wa-mā jarā baynahum min al-mushājara</i>	With other stories in Rylands 652.
Add. 3491: fols. 1–8: <i>al-Dik wa-l-tha'lab</i> fols. 9–23: <i>al-Asfūr ma'a al-ṣayyād</i> fols. 24–64: 18 anecdotes from <i>al-Malik Jal'ād</i> <sup>a</sup>	652 [137] (fols. 126–30) (fols. 131b–140) 651 [136] (fols. 66–157)	
Add. 3492: fols. 1–11: <i>Ḥikāyat mā waqa'a lil-sultān Ḥasan</i> fols. 12–17: <i>Ḥikāyat mā waqa'a li-ba'd wulāt Miṣr</i> fols. 18–24: <i>Mā waqa'a lil-Barāmika</i> <sup>b</sup> fols. 25–61: <i>Mā ruwiya 'an Ibn 'Abbās</i>	—	

Chance Bequest	John Rylands Library	Remarks
Add. 3493 (fols. 48): <i>al-Sultān Ḥabīb wa-Durrat al-Ghawwās</i>	652 [137]: fols. 76–106: <i>Ḥikāyat Sultān Ḥabīb wa-Durrat al-Ghawwās</i>	With other stories in Rylands 652.
Add. 3494 (fols. 60): <i>Al-Bunduqānī wa-huwa al-Khalīfa Hārūn al-Rashīd ma'a al-jāriya wa-hiya ibnat al-malik Kisrā wa-ma'a al-jāriya ukht al-ḥājib 'Alā' al-Dīn</i>	649 [134]: fols. 104–43: <i>Ḥikāyat bint al-malik Kisrā</i>	With other stories in Rylands 649.
Add. 3495 (fols. 97): <i>Hārūn al-Rashīd wa-Bāsim al-Ḥaddād</i>	651 [136]: fols. 1–65: <i>Ḥikāya jarat bayn Hārūn al-Rashīd wa-Bāsim al-Ḥaddād</i>	With other stories in Rylands 651.
Add. 3496: fols. 1–25: <i>al-Ḥakīm wa-l-ṭabbākh</i> fols. 27–58: <i>Qiṣṣat 'Atṭāf</i>	652 [137]: fols. 17–33: <i>al-Ḥakīm wa-l-ṭabbākh</i> 652 [137]: fols. 55–75: <i>Qiṣṣat 'Atṭāf</i>	with additional stories in Rylands 652
Add. 3497 (fols. 76): fols. 1–40: <i>Ḥayqār al-ḥakīm al-faylasūf wa-wazīr Sanḥārīb al-malik wa-Nādān ibn ukhtih</i>	650 [135]: fols. 101–130: <i>Ḥayqār al-ḥakīm al-faylasūf wa-wazīr Sanḥārīb al-malik wa-Nādān ibn ukhtih</i>	
fols. 45–76: [ <i>Ḥikāyat</i> ] <i>al-Muristān, wa-fihā khabar 'Alī ibn shāhbandar Baghdād wa-bint Ja'far al-Barmakī</i>	652 [137]: fols. 34–54: <i>Ḥikāyat al-Muristān dār al-shifā'</i>	Identification uncertain
Add. 3498 (fols. 111): A collection of 71 short narratives, entitled <i>Shawāhid</i>	649 [134], 143 fols. in total: 70 stories, including a separate unit of 68 stories and fables, each preceded by the word <i>shāhid</i> (pl. <i>shawāhid</i> )	See above, p. 279

Based on Muehlhaeusler (2013), Mingana (1934), and Browne (1900)<sup>c</sup>

- a Based on Browne, *Hand-List*. Identified by Muehlhaeusler as '*al-Malik Jal'ād* [extracts] a collection of other short narratives, mostly animal fables'.
- b Not listed by Muehlhaeusler. Presumably the story of the Barmakids. Cf. Marzolph and Van Leeuwen, *Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*, 1: 121.
- c Mingana, *Catalogue*; Browne, *Hand-List*; Muehlhaeusler, 'Oriental Tales'.



## Volney's Meditations on Ruins and Empires

*Robert Irwin*

The book from which Felix instructed Safie was Volney's *Ruins of Empires*. I should not have understood the purport of this book had not Felix, in reading it, given very minute explanations. He had chosen this work, he said, because the declamatory style was framed in imitation of the eastern authors. Through this work I obtained a cursory knowledge of history and a view of the several empires at present existing in the world; it gave me an insight into the manners, governments and religions of the different nations of the earth. I heard of the slothful Asiatics, of the stupendous genius and mental activity of the Grecians, of the wars and wonderful virtue of the early Romans—of their subsequent degeneration—of the decline of that mighty empire, of chivalry, Christianity and kings. I heard of the discovery of the American hemisphere and wept with Safie over the hapless fate of its original inhabitants. These wonderful narrations inspired me with strange feelings ...<sup>1</sup>



Constantin-François comte de Chassebeuf de Boisgirais (1757–1820) adopted the name Volney, apparently in homage to Voltaire and Voltaire's place of residence, Ferney. In his youth he was closely associated with the *philosophes*, including Cabanis, d'Holbach, Madame Helvétius, Diderot and Condorcet. He made an early study of medicine and published on Herodotus but then studied classical Arabic with Leroux des Hauterayes at the Collège de France. In 1783, aged twenty-five, Volney set out for Egypt and spent two years in Egypt and Syria, only returning in 1785. His Middle Eastern sojourn resulted in the widely read and much translated *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte* (1787). In 1788 he published *Considérations sur la guerre des Turcs et Russes*, in which he denounced

<sup>1</sup> Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus* (London, 1992), pp. 115–16. *Frankenstein* was first published in 1818, and the monster's introduction to Volney's vision of history occurs in volume two, chapter five.

the tyranny and decadence of the Ottoman Empire. In 1789 he was elected a deputy of the third estate of the Estates General and became a member of the National Constituent Assembly. In 1791 he published his best-known work *Les Ruines, ou Méditations sur la revolutions des empires*. He was appointed by the Directorate to be Director of Agricultural Affairs in Corsica, and it was there that he first met Bonaparte in 1792. (Bonaparte had first read *Voyage* in 1789, and he was to return to it many times subsequently.) In 1793 Volney was arrested and imprisoned for debt but was released with the coming of Thermidor. In 1795 he was appointed by the Committee of Public Instruction to teach history at the newly formed École Normale, and he published *Simplifications des langues orientales, ou Méthode nouvelle d'apprendre les langues arabe, persane et turque avec des caractères européens*.

Together with Jean-Joseph Marcel he campaigned against the prevailing academic focus on the study of classical Arabic and the consequent neglect of spoken Arabic and its various dialects. He lectured on history, and he studied Sanskrit with Alexander Hamilton. He corresponded with the Asiatic Society of Calcutta and the Bengal Orientalists, including Sir William Jones. From 1795 to 1798 he was in the United States. Jefferson was an admiring friend. Napoleon nominated him to the Legion of Honour and made him a count and a senator in 1808, and Louis XVIII made him a peer of France. Those were the days when Arabists were given peerages. He died in 1820.<sup>2</sup> As we shall see, in his lifetime and much more recently his various writings were put to uses that were far from his intentions.

The purpose of Volney's tour of Egypt and Syria needs to be understood in the context of a debate among senior figures in the French political establishment in the 1780s concerning the continued viability or not of the Ottoman Empire and the desirability or not of a future French occupation of Egypt. The Hungarian François Baron de Tott (1733–93) was a leading interventionist. Tott had learned Turkish in Constantinople, and he had served as the Sultan Mustafa's adviser during the Turko-Russian War of 1768–74. He had known Vergennes when Vergennes was ambassador in Constantinople in the 1750s and 1760s. In 1776 he reported to Vergennes, who was by then Minister of Foreign

2 Jean Gaulmier, *L'idéologue Volney, 1757–1820: Contribution à l'histoire de l'orientalisme en France* (Paris and Geneva, 1980). Gaulmier's *Un grand témoin de la révolution et de l'empire, Volney* (Paris, 1959) is an abridged popularization of *L'idéologue Volney*. See also J. Carré, *Voyageurs et écrivains français en Égypte*, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1956), 1: 91–104; L. Valensi, 'Volney', in *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue française*, ed. F. Pouillon (Paris, 2012), pp. 128–30. The Orientalist Jean Gaulmier (1905–97) dedicated a very large part of his career to the study of the life and works of Volney. His researches are never likely to be superseded. What is offered in the following piece are some footnotes and amplifications to his work.

Affairs, on the supposedly imminent downfall of the Ottoman Empire and the desirability of a French occupation of Egypt. That same year Tott was sent on a mission by the Ministry of the Marine to tour the Levantine ports and to pay particular attention to the coastal defences of Egypt. The Arabist Venture de Paradis accompanied him as interpreter. Though Tott and Venture de Paradis were convinced that it would be easy to occupy Egypt and their proposal had the support of merchants in Marseille, the American War and the crisis of the *Ancien Régime* led to the deferment of the Egyptian project. In 1784 Tott published his influential *Mémoires sur les Turcs et les Tartares* on the decline of the Ottomans Empire and its future downfall.<sup>3</sup>

As noted, it was the Ministry of the Marine that had sent Tott out to survey the Levantine ports. Its head, Saint Didier, was a supporter of Tott and published a memorandum on the ease of conquering Egypt. The scholar and traveller Auguste de Choiseul-Gouffier had similar views and, after travelling in Greece and other Ottoman provinces, he had published *Voyage pittoresque en Grèce*. (1782). When in 1784 Choiseul-Gouffier was appointed ambassador to the Porte, Volney expressed astonishment at the choice, given Choiseul-Gouffier's published opinions on the corruption of the Ottoman administration, the desirability of the overthrow of the dynasty and the opportunity to invade Egypt.

Interventionists may also have been encouraged by the publication in 1785–6 of *Lettres sur l'Égypte où l'on offre le parallèle des mœurs anciennes et modernes des ses habitants* by Claude–Etienne Savary (1750–88). In it Savary, who had spent time in Egypt in the years 1776–9, had presented an account of Egypt that seemed to portray it as close to an earthly paradise. Poverty and plague passed unnoticed by Savary. He had praised Ali Bey as the leader of Egyptian autonomy, whereas for Volney he was just another Oriental despot. Savary tended to rely on earlier authors rather than direct observation, and he plundered Strabo, Herodotus, Abū 'l-Fidā', Joinville, Richard Pococke and Benoît de Maillet. Moreover, this plagiaristic book, like his earlier translation of the Qur'an, was full of errors.<sup>4</sup>

But interventionists did not have it all their own way. Indeed, until 1798 they did not have it their way at all. Charles Vergennes, the former Ambassador to Constantinople (1755–68) and subsequently Foreign Minister (1774–87), believed in the possibility of Ottoman reform. Also, the economist Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, who had held office as minister of the marine in 1774 and then as finance minister from 1774 to 1776, was hostile to the Egyptian project, probably because of the expense that this might entail. The young Volney (or

3 F. Hitzel, 'Tott', in *Dictionnaire*, pp. 991–2.

4 Carré, *Voyageurs*, 1:80–90; S. Larzul, 'Savary', in *Dictionnaire*, pp. 927–8.

Boisgirais, as he was then) had studied medicine with the empiricist doctor Pierre-Jean-Georges Cabanis, who frequented the salon of Madame Helvétius and who was a protégé of Turgot. The young Volney had also made a special study of the political and economic ideas of Montesquieu, Helvétius and Turgot.

Volney's *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte* had several aims. The first was to disenchant the proto-Romantic French image of Egypt and replace it with a coolly rational account of the region broadly in accordance with the methods and principles set out in the *Encyclopédie; ou, Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts, et des métiers* (1751–72). But the *Encyclopédie* was not the only model for Volney's approach. He was also steeped in the *Histories* of Herodotus, and the comprehensive account that Herodotus had provided of the manners and customs of the Greeks, Persians, Scythians and Egyptians helped shape Volney's narrative. Michaelis's questionnaire may also have had a role in giving the *Voyage* its scientific edge. Johann David Michaelis (1717–1791) was a professor of biblical studies at Göttingen and the éminence grise behind the planning of the Danish Arabia Expedition of 1761–7. Michaelis, who had some Arabic, believed that a careful study of the society, flora and fauna of contemporary Arabia could shed light on the world of the early Hebrews. To that end he had prepared a detailed questionnaire regarding the regional history, topography, natural science and philology of Arabia for the guidance of the expedition. This was published as *Fragen an eine Gesellschaft gelehrter Männer die auf Befehl Ihro Mäjestat des Königs von Dännemark nach Arabien reisen* (1762), and it was translated into French in 1774.<sup>5</sup> Volney in his travels seems to have worked from a sociological questionnaire.

The disenchantment of Egypt was easily accomplished. *Voyage* opened with a brisk description of the poverty, dust and chaos immediately encountered on disembarking at Alexandria: 'Déjà l'air general de misère qu'il voit sur les hommes, et le mystère qui envelope les maisons, lui font soupçonner la rapacité de la tyrannie, la défiance de l'esclavage.'<sup>6</sup> This was followed by an evocation of the majestic *tristesse* of the local ruins, before Volney got down to giving a business-like account of the commerce of Alexandria and its maritime affairs. There was no mystery and romance here. Savary's romanticized version of an enchanted land was replaced by Volney's descriptions of rapacious and

5 Gaulmier, *L'idéologue*, p. 322; K. von Folsach et al., eds., *The Arabian Journey: Danish Connections with the Islamic World over a Thousand Years* (Århus, 1996), p. 58; S.L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race and Scholarship* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 40.

6 Volney, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte pendant les années 1783, 1784, & 1785*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1787), I: 4.

undisciplined mamluks, corrupt officials and people dying on the streets of Cairo. Happiness was not encountered in the Middle East.

As Volney saw it, despotism was the cause of money-hoarding, poor husbandry, vendettas, depopulation and a lack of technological progress in the region. Tott had presented Egypt as a peaceful and defenceless country, but Volney arrived in Egypt when Murad Bey was preparing a campaign against rebel mamluks in Upper Egypt and, in addition to raising extra taxation, he was resorting to arbitrary exactions.

After Savary and Tott, Montesquieu's *L'Esprit des lois* was another of *Voyage's* targets. As Montesquieu had presented it, in *Lettres Persanes* as well as in *L'Esprit des lois*, Oriental despotism was conditioned by material and climatic factors, was savagely arbitrary, demanded blind obedience and was centred round the mysteries of the harem. In the eighteenth century everyone of any importance read Montesquieu, though it also seems that everyone of any importance disagreed with him. Montesquieu was stimulating, but what he mostly stimulated was dissent. Tott, the Turkish expert and advocate of an Egyptian invasion, was among their number. He rejected Montesquieu's climate theory, and he argued instead that politics was the primary factor in shaping lands and societies and that despotism could as well be exercised in polar regions as in hot climes.

Volney, at odds with de Tott on many things, agreed with him regarding the primacy of politics and more specifically despotism in explaining Oriental poverty and backwardness. Before leaving for Egypt Volney had read *Recherches sur les origines du despotisme oriental* (1761) by Nicolas-Antoine Boulanger (1722–59). Boulanger was a civil engineer, but also an eccentric expert on the Biblical Deluge, on which he had written an article for the *Encyclopédie*. A keen anti-Christian, he believed that theocracy, religious institutions and Oriental despotisms depended upon superstition and were all the product of the fear caused by the Great Flood and other natural catastrophes. Despotism was a primitive phase in society's evolution that would wither away as science and rationality advanced. The *Recherches* had been published posthumously by the Baron d'Holbach. According to Lucette Valensi, it was Boulanger who 'canonized the concept of Oriental despotism'.<sup>7</sup>

Volney, who was hostile towards all religions, was particularly hostile to Islam. The Qur'an was the charter of despotism. It was, he thought, a document that was originally designed to establish the despotism of Muhammad. Scholarship which was centred on the Qur'an was bound to be sterile. The duration

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<sup>7</sup> Valensi, 'Boulanger', in *Dictionnaire*, p. 144.

of the Abbasid Caliphate had been too brief for the sciences to develop properly, and in any case most Arab science had been borrowed from the Greeks.

Volney, in rejecting Montesquieu's view that despotism was the product of climate, was rejecting also the notion that subjection to tyranny was the inevitable fate of Oriental races, and so he looked forward to the liberation of the Arabs and others from oppression and backwardness. The Arabs and Copts longed to be liberated from the Turks. Volney also rejected the myth of the lazy Oriental, and he rejected Savary's contention that the climate made the Egyptians soft.

The pyramids were a monument to tyranny, and he had this to say about the neglect and even actual destruction of Pharaonic antiquities: 'tandis que l'amateur des arts s'indigne dans l'Alexandrie de voir scier les colonnes des palais, pour en faire des meules de moulin, le philosophe, après cette première émotion que cause la perte de toute belle chose, ne peut s'empêcher de sourire à la justice secrète du sort, qui rend au peuple ce qui lui coûta tant des peines, et qui soumet au plus humbles de ses besoins, l'orgueil d'un lux inutile.'<sup>8</sup> This observation prefigures the meditation in *Ruines* on the fate of all tyrannies. It also suggests the possibility that Volney was familiar with the paintings of Hubert Robert in which peasants, shepherds and washerwomen were shown going about their daily business in the shadow of majestic Roman ruins. (On Robert's ruin paintings, see below.) Volney envisaged that a future European cultural presence in the country would be good for the preservation and study of the remaining ancient monuments, though this did not mean that he was in favour of a French invasion. A sustained occupation of Egypt would be impossible because of the French ignorance of the local languages and customs.

In Ottoman Syria, he spent time in the Basilian Monastery of Mar Hanna in Mount Lebanon where he may have studied to improve his Arabic. The monastery had one of the only two substantial libraries in Syria. (The other belonged to Jezzar Pasha in Acre). Volney was to complain about the dearth of books in Syria and Egypt, which he attributed to the Muslims' reluctance to adopt printing as well as the narrowly religious Muslim educational curriculum. Mar Hanna also served as a base for visiting other places. As he travelled in Syria, he made further observations on the economic consequences of despotism. For example, in the Pashalik of Aleppo there were 400 villages where once there had been 3,200. He also stressed the military resources provided by tribes and militias, and in particular the warlike quality of Lebanese tribal forces.

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<sup>8</sup> Volney, *Voyage*, 1:249–50.

Volney's account of Egypt and Syria, impersonal and apparently lacking in any polemical purpose, reads like reportage, but circumstantial evidence, carefully assembled by Jean Gaulmier, suggests that there was probably a secret agenda behind what was published. The adoption of the cover name Volney by Boisgirais coincided with his departure to Egypt. Though Volney claimed that he was enabled to spend the next two years abroad thanks to a legacy from a relative, it remains mysterious who this relative was. While in the Levant, Volney mostly avoided the company of other Frenchmen. He claimed that he went out as a disinterested student, but Gaulmier argues that the real purpose of his mission was to prepare and publish an account of Middle East which would make the case against French proposals to occupy Egypt and that the mission was probably funded by Vergennes.<sup>9</sup> Though unprovable, this is most plausible.

A reading of *Considérations sur la guerre des Turcs et des Russes* (1788) confirms that Volney was totally opposed to a French occupation of Egypt. He conceded that the proposal was superficially attractive before going on to argue that prudence should take precedence over greed. 'Ils sont grands & nombreux ces inconvéniens & ces obstacles. D'abord, pour nous approprier l'Égypte, il faudra soutenir trois guerres; la première de la part des Turcs ... la seconde de la part des Anglais ... la troisième enfin, de la part des Naturels de l'Égypte, et celle-là, quoique en apparence la moins redoutable, seroit en effet le plus dangereux ... le fanatisme tiendrait lieu d'art & de courage, et le fanatisme est toujours un ennemi dangereux; il regne encore dans toute sa faveur en Égypte; le nom des Francs y est en horreur & ils ne s'y établiront que par la depopulation ...'.<sup>10</sup> He predicted that the behaviour of French soldiers, especially their wine drinking and their attitude towards the local women, would scandalize the native Muslims. The very name of the Franks was held in detestation by the Muslims, and the French would only have conquered Egypt in order to devastate it. The climate would not agree with the accustomed French drinking and eating. Furthermore occupying Egypt would be expensive and unpopular, for it would require a garrison of at least 25,000. Having denounced the Egyptian project, he went on to suggest that not one of France's colonial ventures had been successful—not Milan, Naples, Sicily, India, Madagascar, Cayenne, Mississippi or Canada.<sup>11</sup> How right Volney was. The 1798 French expedition to Egypt turned out to be a military disaster. Practicalities apart, the underlying reason for his hostility to the occupation of Egypt was that he was always

9 Gaulmier, *L'idéologue*, pp. 43–63.

10 Volney, *Considérations sur la guerre actuel des Turcs* [sic] (London, 1788), pp. 124–5.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 125–8.

opposed to the use of force. In 1790 he was to propose a motion in the National Assembly against all wars of aggression.<sup>12</sup> In 1795 he opposed the French expedition to occupy San Domingo.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, Volney did think that the Ottoman Empire was doomed, as indeed all despotisms were doomed; he expected that the Russians would soon take Constantinople, and he hoped for the establishment of a Greek empire on the ruins of the Turkish one. He also believed that the Middle East deserved to be westernised and that the Arabs needed to adopt European values. So, though he should be considered to be an early anti-colonialist, he was nevertheless a devout believer in the European Enlightenment's *mission civilisatrice*.

In *Orientalism* Edward Said commented unfavourably on the oppressive impersonality of Volney's report on the Middle East.<sup>14</sup> (Though, if one reads Said's account of Gérard de Nerval, it seems that the opposite, a highly personal, romantic, dreamy and partly fictional account of the Orient, was at least as bad.)<sup>15</sup> Still, it is true that the *Voyage* mostly makes for dry reading, and Savary offered easier, if unreliable pleasures. But Said's presentation of the *Voyage* completely elided Volney's generous indignation regarding the sufferings of the Arabs and others under Turkish rule, his compassion for the suffering the region's poor and his polemics against the violent and arbitrary exactions of the mamluks and pashas. Instead Said presented *Voyage* as a blueprint for the invasion of Egypt. Though this may have been how it was used, it is evidently not what Volney intended.

Said's references to Volney's writings are somewhat confused. His chief source on what Volney wrote appears not to be what Volney actually wrote, but rather Bonaparte's memoirs which were dictated on St Helena to Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne. Moreover, when Said claimed to be quoting Volney's *Voyage* on the possibility of conquering Egypt, he was actually drawing on a passage in *Considérations sur la guerre des Turcs et des Russes* and giving that passage a meaning that is evidently opposite to the one intended, as if Volney was actually advocating a war first with the Turks, then with the English and finally with the Muslims, rather than issuing a warning about these overwhelming multiple obstacles.

It is true that, as Said claims, Napoleon did study the *Voyage*. It may also be true that Volney was 'canonically hostile to Islam as a religion', though what is the sense of 'canonically' here? ('Orthodoxly?') Volney was notoriously hostile

12 Gaulmier, *L'idéologue*, pp. 190–91, 586–8.

13 Ibid., pp. 439–45; A.J. Connor, 'Volney and the French Expedition', *French Studies*, 4 (1950), 252–5; 253.

14 E. Said, *Orientalism*, (London, 1978), p. 81.

15 Ibid., pp. 179–85.



to all religions. But it is quite contrary to the truth to claim that Volney, like Chateaubriand and Lamartine later, 'eyed the Near Orient as a likely place for the realization of French colonial ambition'.<sup>16</sup> According to Said, 'French pilgrims from Volney on planned and projected for, imagined, ruminated about places that were principally *in their minds*. They constructed schemes for a typically French, perhaps even a European concert in the Orient, which of course they supposed would be orchestrated by them.' Here Said, who has elsewhere condemned the *Voyage* for its documentary accuracy, seems to be suggesting that Volney's version of Egypt, while setting out a programme for occupation, was nevertheless primarily a mental construct. 'Read the books, seems to have been Volney's thesis, and far from being disoriented by the Orient, you will compel it to you.'<sup>17</sup> Thus, according to Said, Volney's two books were intended as handbooks for French imperialism. But one has to wonder what more Volney could have written in order to establish his credentials as an anti-imperialist.

When the French did invade Egypt in 1798, Bonaparte and his generals did indeed find the *Voyage* to be a useful guide to the land they sought to occupy. It is also possible that the slogan of the invading French, 'guerre au châteaux, paix aux chaumières', owed something to the *Voyage's* advocacy of the desirability of liberating the Arabs and Copts from Turkish rule. Bonaparte had already met Volney in Corsica in 1792.<sup>18</sup> Later he had wanted to bring Volney with him to Egypt as interpreter and adviser, but Volney resisted and remained in Paris. At first the occupation went well, and Bonaparte, who had obsessively studied the campaigns of Alexander in Egypt and Asia, dreamt of occupying Syria and from there advancing on the British possessions in India. But Volney in Paris published an article in the *Moniteur* in which he ridiculed the notion that the Ottoman provinces could possibly serve as a springboard for an attack on India. He predicted that it would be difficult for the French army to advance even as far as Damascus and Aleppo. The distances involved were far too great.<sup>19</sup> Again, how right he was.

In the absence of Volney, Jean-Joseph Marcel and Jean-Michel Venture de Paradis were the leading Arabists who accompanied Bonaparte to Egypt. Marcel had studied Arabic and Hebrew in the *École des langues orientales vivantes* in Paris under Silvestre de Sacy, Langlès and Venture de Paradis. Marcel ran the Arabic printing press in Cairo during the brief French occupation.<sup>20</sup> Venture

16 Ibid., p. 81.

17 Ibid., pp. 169–70.

18 Gaulmier, *L'idéologue*, pp. 243–6.

19 Ibid., pp. 406–7.

20 L. Valensi, 'Marcel', in *Dictionnaire*, p. 684.

de Paradis (1739–99) has already been mentioned. He was the son of a dragoon in the Levant and, after years of experience as an interpreter in Turkish and Arabic, he had accompanied Baron de Tott on his survey of Levantine ports. Not only did Venture agree with Tott's views on the vulnerability of Egypt, but he also drew on the *Voyage* to support that case.<sup>21</sup> Despite this, he and Volney seem to have been friends and collaborators. They shared had the same intellectual formation, since Venture was a sceptic who had spent two years in the 1780s in Paris, where he had frequented the salons of the *philosophes*.<sup>22</sup> Venture's gloom about the condition of Oriental studies in France, which was shared by Volney and Marcel, led him to campaign successfully for the creation of the *École des langues orientales vivantes* (which was established in 1790).

Venture assisted Volney in editing the *Voyage* and gave him his notes about Ali Bey and about the recent political history of Syria.<sup>23</sup> Venture's translation of Ghars al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Shāhīn al-Shaykhī al-Zāhīrī's *Zubdat kashf al-mamālik* was made available to Volney, who produced an extensive summary of it in the *Voyage*. Venture's work on this text inaugurated the study of mamluk history in Europe. Khalīl al-Zāhīrī had served as a senior administrator under a number of Circassian mamluk sultans in the fifteenth century. His *Zubdat* is the abridged version of his mid-fifteenth-century administrative and geographical treatise. Venture's translation of this manuscript from the Bibliothèque du roi was not actually published until 1950.<sup>24</sup> Though Venture was to serve as Bonaparte's interpreter and advisor, he was one of many Frenchmen who in 1799 were abandoned to die of plague or dysentery in southern Palestine.<sup>25</sup>

Although Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt features prominently in Said's *Orientalism*, neither Marcel nor Venture de Paradis are mentioned in it. Instead it is implied that Napoleon in Egypt relied on many of the pupils of Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy for his translators.<sup>26</sup> But Marcel apart, it is not clear who those pupils were. Nor is it obvious how much practical use Silvestre de Sacy's teaching could have been. As Silvestre de Sacy confessed in a letter to a

21 Laurens, *Les Origines*, p. 181.

22 J. Gaulmier, 'Introduction', in *La Zubda Kachf al-Mamalik de Khalil al-Zahiri*, ed. J. Gaulmier, trans. Venture de Paradis (Beirut, 1950), p. xxii.

23 *Ibid.*, p. xxii.

24 J. Gaulmier and T. Fahd, 'Ibn Shahin al-Zahiri', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed, 12 vols. (Leiden, 1960–2009), 3: 935. See also the Arabic edition, Khalil ibn Shahin al-Zahiri, *Zubdat kashf al-mamalik*, ed. P. Ravaisse (Paris, 1894).

25 On the career of Venture de Paradis, see Gaulmier, 'Introduction', pp. vii–xlvi; Gaulmier, *L'idéologue*; index s.v. Venture de Paradis; L. Valensi, 'Venture de Paradis', in *Dictionnaire*, pp. 1010–12. But Venture de Paradis awaits full monographic treatment.

26 Said, *Orientalism*, p. 83.

friend, his Arabic was entirely based on books, and he could not speak it nor understand it when spoken.<sup>27</sup> He had no knowledge of Egyptian colloquial. The Egyptian scholar al-Tahtawi, who studied in Paris in the years 1826–31 and who met Silvestre de Sacy several times, reported that the great scholar pronounced Arabic words with a foreign accent and could not speak Arabic unless he had a book in his hands.<sup>28</sup>

'The poetry of ruins is always a reverie before the encroachment of oblivion,' wrote Jean Starobinski. 'It has been pointed out,' he continued:

that for a ruin to appear beautiful, the act of destruction must be remote enough for its precise circumstances to have been forgotten: it can then be imputed to an anonymous power, to a featureless transcendent force—History, Destiny. We do not muse calmly before recent ruins, which smell of bloodshed: we clear them away as quickly as possible and then rebuild ... . The poetry of ruins is the poetry of what has partially survived destruction, though remaining lost in oblivion: no one must retain the image of the intact building. The ruin *par excellence* indicates an abandoned cult a forgotten god. It expresses neglect, desertion. The ancient monument had originally been a memorial, a "monition," perpetuating a memory. But the initial memory has now been lost, to be replaced with a second significance, which resides in the disappearance of the memory that the constructor had claimed he was perpetuating in this stone. Its melancholy resides in the fact that it has become a monument of lost significance.<sup>29</sup>

Volney's other great book, *Les Ruines, ou méditations sur les revolutions des empires* (1791) followed closely on the publication of *Voyage*. It was embraced by the intelligentsia and it was the talk of the salons, spas and gaming rooms. Though *Ruines* was planned in tandem with *Voyage*, its Ciceronian cadences were in stark contrast to the stripped-down style of the former book. It opens with a sonorous evocation of the ruins of Palmyra: 'Je vous salue, ruines solitaires, tombeaux saints, murs silencieux! C'est vous que j'invoque; c'est à vous que j'adresse ma prière.'<sup>30</sup> Volney presents himself as sitting amidst those ruins, musing on the grandeur of Palmyra as it once was and on the causes of the passing of its greatness. How could this once flourishing city be reduced to

27 Gaulmier, *L'idéologue*, p. 488n.

28 Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi, *An Imam in Paris; Account of a Stay in France by an Egyptian Cleric (1826–31)*, trans. D.L. Newman (London, 2004), pp. 190–91.

29 J. Starobinski, *The Invention of Liberty 1780–1789*, trans. B.G. Swift (Geneva, 1964), p. 180.

30 Volney, *Les Ruines, ou méditations sur les revolutions des empires* (Paris, 1791), p. xi.

such a state? How was it that this city, which had been wealthy under pagans, was now ruined and impoverished under Islam? Why was the East, which had once been so wealthy, now so impoverished and backward compared with the West? And, in the long run, must not the Europe follow the fate of the formerly great and prosperous empires of the Levant? So that some future traveller would gaze upon the ruins of some great city on the banks of the Seine, or the Thames, or the Zuyder Sea and he will weep for the vanished greatness of the inhabitants of that city.<sup>31</sup>

The conjuring up of a vision of the ruins of the future was not original with Volney. In a narrative of his travels in Greece and Turkey, James Caulfield (later Lord Charlemont), having contemplated the ruins of Athens, was plunged into a gloomy thought: 'How melancholy should be reflection should we suppose, what surely must come to pass, that in a few ages hence, London, the Carthage, the Memphis, the Athens of the present world, should be reduced to a state like this, and travellers shall come, perhaps from America, to see its ruins.'<sup>32</sup> There is no evidence that Volney had read *The Travels of Lord Charlemont in Greece and Turkey* (1749). But the topos of ruins as prolepsis had a closer precursor in a work of proto-science fiction which it is likely that Volney had read. In 1771 the radical writer and playwright Louis Sébastien Mercier (1740–1781) had published *L'an deux mille quatre cent quarante*, and an expanded edition appeared in 1786. In this book he presented an exciting portrait of life in France in 2440. By then gentlemen would no longer be carrying swords, and there would be no more armies; France was governed according to Enlightenment principles and the Bastille was no more. In general, eighteenth-century France did not compare well with the country it would become in the twenty-fifth century. In the latter century Mercier's narrator visits Versailles, by then a monument to a vanished and discredited despotism: 'J'arrive, je cherche des yeux ce palais superbe d'où partaient les destinées de plusieurs nations. Quelle surprise! Je n'aperçus que des débris, des murs entrouverts, des stauves mutilées; quelques portiques, à moitié renversés, laissaient entrevoir une idée confuse de son magnificence.' Thereupon the visitor to these ruins encounters the wraith of Louis XIV, who is lamenting his pride which had led him on to undertake the building of this extravagant enterprise.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>32</sup> James Caulfield, *The Travels of Lord Charlemont in Greece and Turkey, 1749*, ed. W.B. Stanford and E.J. Finopoulos (London, 1984), p. 135.

<sup>33</sup> L.S. Mercier, *L'An 2440: Rêve s'il en fut jamais*, ed. C. Cave and C. Marcandier Collard (Paris, 1999), pp. 293–4. On Mercier, see P. Versins, *Enclopédie de l'Utopie et de la science fiction* (Lausanne, 1972), pp. 581–3.

To return to Volney, his visitor to Palmyra is gloomily pondering the inevitable ruin of all empires and their monuments when, all of a sudden, there appears beside him a spectral genius, or genie, who takes Volney aloft and gives him an airborne lecture on the causes of the rise and fall of empires and much else besides. This aerial perspective on the world's problems perhaps owes something to the eighteenth-century fantasies about the possibility of human flight and the eventual cult of ballooning. The fantasies included Robert Paltock's *The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins, A Man of Cornwall* (London, 1750), the anonymous *The Voyages of Hildebrand Bowman* (London, 1778) and Nicolas-Anne-Edmé Rétif de la Bretonne's *La Découverte australe par un homme-volant, ou le Dédale français* (Paris, 1781). Finally in 1783 the Montgolfier brothers turned fantasy into fact with the first manned flight by balloon.<sup>34</sup>

The genius explains that Volney's narrator has been misreading the ruins. Their real message is not about the passage of Time and the inevitable Doom of all things, since ruins are not inevitable, but are the product of greed, corruption and bad government. Man is responsible for his own fate, and it was he, not Time, who had brought about the ruin of Palmyra.

Steeped in the classics, Volney found it natural to compare the mamluks and pashas to the tyrants of Syracuse and other oppressive despots of classical antiquity. So there was nothing inherently exotic, or 'Other', about despotism, and when Volney wrote about Oriental despotism, he was also thinking about the French despotism that had so recently been overthrown: 'A peine eut-il achevé ces mots qu'un bruit immense s'éleva du côté de l'Occident; et y tournant mes regards, j'aperçus, à l'extrémité de la Méditerranée, dans la domaine de l'une des nations de l'Europe, un mouvement prodigieux ...'<sup>35</sup> Chapter fifteen of *Ruines* went on to present an idealized account of the French Revolution and the hopes for the ultimate triumph of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity throughout the world—not just in France, but also in the Arab world, Greece and elsewhere.

The genius instructed the anonymous visionary and narrator of *Ruines* on the rise of humanity from state of nature through the associations enabled by the social contract, to the ultimate dissolution of those associations due to self-love. Frankenstein's monster would benefit from this potted and moralising history. Yet architectural ruins are merely metaphors for something else, since they point to spiritual and intellectual desolation, and the religions and cosmologies that are the real ruin of mankind. Everywhere religions have served

34 M. Warner, *Stranger Magic: Charmed States and the Arabian Nights* (London, 2011), pp. 343–53.

35 Volney, *Les Ruines*, p. 26.

to underpin despotisms and a great deal of the latter part of *Ruines* is a devoted to a disorderly kind of theological symposium in which none of the world's religions is shown to come out well.

Volney had not lingered to meditate over any ruins in the earlier *Voyage*, nor had he visited Palmyra during his sojourn in Syria. His sources for his famous of evocation of its ruins are twofold. He drew upon the publication of *The Ruins of Palmyra, otherwise Tedmor in the Desert* by Robert Wood and James Dawkins (London, 1753), a book based on their travels in Syria in 1751. (A French translation of Wood and Dawkins was also published in 1753.) Wood, like Gibbon, was interested in the causes of the rise and fall of empires and he had argued that Palmyra had been doomed by its surrender to Rome.

It is also most probable that in eloquently evoking the appearance of a place that he had never visited, Volney drew upon the images of the artist Louis-François Cassas (1756-1827). In 1784 Cassas had accompanied the Ambassador Count Choiseul-Gouffier to Constantinople and then spent fourteen months touring Syria and Egypt (subsidised by Choiseul-Gouffier) where he made sketches which he would turn into engravings and oil paintings on his return to France in 1787. He began publishing *Voyage pittoresque de la Syrie, de la Phénecie, de la Palestine et de la Basse Egypte* in 1799. He had visited Palmyra in 1785 and made thousands of sketches of its ruins. He took some liberties in those sketches in order to accentuate the theatrical look of its grand colonnade. Volney, who had met Cassas in the East, provided introductions to the three volumes of *Voyage pittoresque*.

The conceit of ruins delivering messages about the vanity of wealth, pomp and power is a very old one. Isaiah (34:13) had evoked the doom of Idumea: 'And thorns shall come up in her palaces and nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons and a court for owls.' The Bible—and, in particular, books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Revelation—is full of prophecies regarding the ruin of once mighty and populous places. The atheist Volney's rhetoric with its grandiose cadences perhaps has biblical resonances. The Qur'an with its allusions to the doom of Pharaoh, Shaddad and the Adites might have also fed into Volney's meditations on the fate of tyrants. Several of the stories in *The Thousand and One Nights* address the same theme (in particular, 'The City of Brass'). Gaulmier suggested that Volney, like Voltaire, fell under the influence of Galland's translation of the *Mille et une Nuits*.<sup>36</sup> In chapter twenty-one of *Les Ruines*,<sup>37</sup> the Imam's account of the pleasures of the Muslim paradise with its baths of milk and honey, houris and perfumes of

36 Gaulmier, *L'idéologue*, p. 113.

37 Volney, *Les Ruines*, p. 185.

Arabia and India provoked the smiles of the leaders of rival religions. 'Ne droit-on pas entendre un chapitre des Mille et Nuits?'

Volney's deployment of the theme of ruins as messengers has other precursors. Excavations at Herculaneum in 1738 led to the publication of *Le antichità di Ercolano* in the years 1757–92 and to an increasing interest in ruins and their latent meaning. A number of artists, besides Cassas, made a speciality of the depiction of ruins, including Monsu Desiderio, Pannini, Ghisolfi and Piranesi. Hubert Robert (1733–1808) has been described as the last of the great ruins painters. Typically Robert's peasants are shown as being unimpressed by the majestic Roman ruins under which they do their washing, herd their flocks or idle their time away. Robert's implicit neglect of any romantic or moralizing significance in the ruins he painted provoked Denis Diderot to publish a famous work of aesthetic criticism, 'The Salon of 1767', in which he became the theoretician of the poetics of ruins. He admired Robert's paintings, but, on reflection, the presence of so many peasants in his ruins disturbed Diderot, and the painting 'Grand Gallery, Lit from Below' became the pretext for Diderot's meditation: 'Ne sentez-vous pas qu'il y a trop de figures ici, qu'il en faut effacer les trois quarts? Il n'en faut réserver que celles qui ajouteront à la solitude et au silence d'un seul homme, qui aurait erré dans les ténèbres, les bras croisés sur la poitrine et la tête penchée m'aurait affecté davantage; l'obscurité seule, la majesté de l'édifice, la grandeur de la fabrique, l'étendue, la tranquillité, le retentissement sourd de l'espace m'aurait fait frémir ...'. And a little later in the same review: 'Les idées que les ruines réveillent en moi sont grandes. Tout s'anéantit, tout périt, tout passe, il n'y a que le monde qui reste, il n'y a que le temps qui dure. Qu'il est vieux, ce monde! Je marche entre deux éternités. De quelque part que je jette les yeux, les objets qui m'entourent m'annoncent un fin et me résignent à celle qui m'attend. Qu'est-ce que mon existence éphémère en comparaison de celle de ce rocher qui s'affaisse, de ce vallon qui se creuse, de celle forêt qui chancelle, de ces masses suspendues au dessus de ma tête qui s'ébranlent ...'.<sup>38</sup>

Volney is known to have been interested in Celtism, and it is also likely that his melancholy evocation of ruins owed something to a reading of James Macpherson's *Fingal, an Ancient Epic Poem, in Six Books: Together with Several Other Poems, Composed by Ossian, the Son of Fingal* (1762). This was another book that was part of the common culture of the Enlightenment era. It was admired by Scott, Diderot, Jefferson, Gibbon and Napoleon. Turgot had translated fragments of Ossian, and then in 1777 the whole work had been translated into French. Volney was a friend of Jefferson and it seems a client of Turgot's.

<sup>38</sup> Denis Diderot, *Salons*, ed. J. Sez nec and J. Adhémar, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1963), 3: 228–9.

Certainly the Ossianic *oeuvre* helped prime readers' responses to *Les Ruines*. Despite the attribution to Ossian, these allegedly ancient Celtic poems were largely the work of Macpherson, though he did draw on authentic Gaelic poetry and lore.

*Fingal* and Macpherson's subsequent collection of similar compositions, *Temura*, have an elegiac quality, as they evoke ancient heroes, lost kingdoms, mist-shrouded hills and ruins: 'Swaran said the King of the hills, today our fame is greatest. We shall pass away like a dream. No sound will be in the fields of our battles. Our tombs will be lost in the heath. The hunter shall not know the place of our rest. Our names may be heard in say, but the strength of our arms will cease. O Ossian, Carmil and Ullan, you know of heroes that are no more. Give us the song of other years.'<sup>39</sup> Similarly: 'I have seen the walls of Balclutha, but they were desolate. The fire had resounded in the halls: and the voice of the people is heard no more. The stream of Clutha was removed from its place, by the fall of the walls.—the thistle shook there, its lonely head: the moss whistled to the wind. The fox looked out, from the windows, the rank grass of the wall waved round his head.—desolate is the dwelling of Moira, silence is the home of her fathers.—Raise the sound of mourning ...'<sup>40</sup> There are similar laments for the ruins of Selma, Temora and Tura in the Ossianic corpus.<sup>41</sup>

A comprehensive account of the subsequent influence of *Les Ruines* would entail a remarkably wide-ranging survey of literature and the arts in early nineteenth-century Europe and America. Only a few examples of that influence will be given here. The interest shown by Frankenstein's monster in the historical lessons contained in *Les Ruines* has already been cited. But Mary Shelley's husband, the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822), should probably be accounted as Volney's most fervent disciple. Shelley followed Volney most closely in presenting Oriental ruins as the testimony of ancient tyranny, notably in a section of the lengthy poem 'Alastor; Or, The Spirit of Solitude' (1816), in which Alastor mused on 'the awful ruins of old', Athens, Tyre, Balbec, Jerusalem, Babylon, the pyramids, Memphis and Thebes':

He lingered, poring on memorials  
Of the world's youth, through the long burning day  
Gazed on those speechless shapes, nor, when the moon

39 James Macpherson, *Poems of Ossian and Related Works*, ed. Howard Gaskill (Edinburgh, 1996), p. 101.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 128.

41 Gaulmier, *L'idéologue*, pp. 224–5.



Filled the mysterious halls with floating shades  
 Suspended he that task, but ever gazed  
 And gazed, till meaning on his vacant mind  
 Flashed like strong inspiration, and he saw  
 The thrilling secrets of the birth of time.<sup>42</sup>

'Alastor' (the word is Greek for 'evil genius') is a highly personal poem about the danger of spiritual and intellectual solitude. But the Volneyan political message embodied in Palmyra's ruins had appeared in the longer poem 'Queen Mab' (1816):

'Behold', the Fairy cried,  
 'Palmyra's ruined palaces!—  
 Behold where grandeur frowned;  
 Behold! Where pleasure smiled;  
 What now remains ...'<sup>43</sup>

Queen Mab presented a broader and more programmatic political exposition of Volney's ideas. Shelley, like Volney before him had been disappointed and puzzled by the eventual failure of the French Revolution and in 'Revolt of Islam' (1818) he presented an idealised portrait of that Revolution. He was, like Volney a radical and a rationalist, but a passionate and dreamy rationalist. 'Hellas': 'The World is weary of the past'. Queen Mab drew on chapters nineteen to twenty-four of *Ruines*: 'General Assembly of the Peoples', 'Investigation of Truth', 'Problem of Religious Contradictions', 'Origin and Genealogy of Religious Ideas', 'End of All Religions the Same' and 'Solution of the Problem of Contradictions'.

But Shelley's 'Ozymandias' (1818) is surely the most famous of all poems in which a ruin testifies to Oriental tyranny, its bombast and its limits:

Look on my Works, ye Mighty and despair!  
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
 Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare  
 The lone and level sands stretch far away.<sup>44</sup>

But by the opening decades of the nineteenth century the age of the *philosophes* had passed, and those who read Volney and enthused about him were in

42 Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Major Works* (Oxford, 2003), p. 96.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 198.

general Romantics (and Shelley was exceptional in his romantic radicalism). Volney had conjured up the ruins to deliver the message that in time tyranny and priesthood are doomed, and that the structures of oppression—palaces, cathedrals and prisons—will be brought to ruin, but those readers who had been impressed by what they read nevertheless tended to broaden the message of ruins as portending the death of all regimes and all peoples, whether good or tyrannous.

Volney wrote in an age when the themes and images conjured up by political rhetoric easily found their way into fiction, poetry and the visual arts, and those who came after him took from him what they wanted. The poem 'Palmyra' (1806), by the novelist and poet Thomas Love Peacock, provides a typical example of the way later writers picked up on Volney's imagery and ran with it in quite a different direction. The opening of the poem is accompanied by a lengthy footnote which cites both Robert Wood and Volney. But Peacock's bombastic verses have dispensed with the political message and instead offer windy observations on DEATH, TIME, MEMORY, FATE and suchlike, and the poem ends with a most un-Volneyan injunction to resign oneself to God's will.<sup>45</sup> Similarly the cities of the Euphrates and streets of Palmyra served the German poet Friedrich Hölderlin as a pretext for a brief meditation on the transience of all things in his short poem 'Ages of Life'.<sup>46</sup> Ruins had become generalized teaching aids.

Reading Volney raised general doubts about the reality of historical progress (as was implicit in the reading of *Ruines* in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*). Volney's (and perhaps Mercier's) fantasies concerning ruins of the future gave rise to a number painterly interpretations of which the most notable were Hubert Robert's vision of the Louvre, 'Vue Imaginaire de la Grande Galerie en Ruines' (1796). This was perhaps the first painting in which an existing building was envisaged as a future ruin, but, just a few years later, Joseph Gandy produced 'View of the Rotunda of the Bank of England in Ruins' (1798). Then, in a review of Ranke's *History of the Popes* in the October 1840 of the *Edinburgh Review*, the caprice was given literary form once more, as Thomas Macaulay wrote of the Catholic Church: 'And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St Pauls.'<sup>47</sup> Decades later, the engraver Gustave Doré was to give Macaulay's conceit visual form

45 Thomas Love Peacock, *The Works ...*, ed. H. Cole, 3 vols. (London 1875), 1: 16–22.

46 Friedrich Hölderlin, *Poems and Fragments*, 3rd ed., trans. M. Hamburger (London, 1994), pp. 388–9.

47 Thomas Macaulay, review of *The Ecclesiastical and Political History of the Popes of Rome, During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* by Leopold Ranke, *Edinburgh Review*, October 1840, pp. 227–58; 228.

when he depicted the New Zealander on the South Bank looking across the Thames to contemplate the ruins of London: 'Now we have watched the fleets into noisy Billingsgate; and now gossiped looking towards Wren's grand dome, shaping Macaulay's dream of the far future, with the tourist New Zealander upon the broken parapets, contemplating something matching—

The glory that was Greece—  
The grandeur that was Rome.<sup>48</sup>

In the long run Volney's writings fell out of favour, in part because of his anti-colonialist attitudes and his anti-Catholicism. In a famous essay, included in Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve's *Causeries du Lundi* (1851–2), Sainte-Beuve delivered a stern judgement and denounced Volney's writings as reflecting the author's personality and being dry, cold and arrogant.<sup>49</sup> The intentions of Volney, the ideologue and anti-imperialist, were repeatedly confounded as his writings became hostages to fortune in the successive misreadings of imperialists, romantics and detractors of Orientalism.

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48 Gustave Doré and Blanchard Jerrold, *London, a Pilgrimage* (London, 1872), pp. 188, 190.

49 Claude-Augustin de Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du lundi*, 15 vols. (Paris, 1851–88), 7: 389–433.

## Malivoire et Rousseau informateurs de la cour de Vienne : Les bouleversements de la Perse des années 1795–1798 vus de Bagdad

*Francis Richard*

Ancien 'Jeune de langues', Etienne-Charles de Malivoire était né à Versailles en octobre 1767, fils d'un huissier du Cabinet de la Reine.<sup>1</sup> Il avait d'abord étudié au Collège des Jeunes de langues à Paris et en était sorti le 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1784 ;<sup>2</sup> il accompagna alors en qualité de drogman l'ambassade de Choiseul-Gouffier et commença sa carrière de drogman d'abord en Morée, puis à Alexandrie. A la Révolution, considéré comme émigré, il était parti pour Bagdad où il avait trouvé un emploi comme facteur. Il avait alors voyagé quelque temps en compagnie de Sir Sydney Smith, un officier de marine britannique qui appréciait ses compétences. Il fut ensuite pris à son service par le frère de ce dernier, John Spencer Smith, qui en fit son secrétaire. John Spencer Smith deviendra chargé d'affaires britannique à Constantinople à partir de 1795, puis ministre plénipotentiaire de 1798 à 1799 jusqu'à l'arrivée de Lord Elgin à Istanbul. Smith recommanda alors à l'ambassadeur de nommer Malivoire comme chancelier eu égard à ses compétences acquises comme 'Jeune de langues', mais Elgin ne voulait pas d'un non-britannique.

Par la suite, revenu au service de la France, Malivoire reçut en 1802 la charge de 'consul général' de France à Andrinople et fut été nommé en 1814, après la suppression du poste d'Andrinople, vice-consul à Salonique. Il fut désigné en décembre 1815 pour le poste de vice-consul à Tunis, puis, après un congé en France en 1824, pour celui de consul de France au Caire en 1826<sup>3</sup> et—à partir de

1 A. Mézin, *Les consuls de France au siècle des Lumières* (Paris, 1998), pp. 173-4 (avec référence au dossier personnel de Malivoire) ; D. Vlami, *Trading with the Ottomans : The Levant Company in the Middle East* (London et New York, 2015), p. 56.

2 H. Cordier, 'Un interprète du général Brune et la fin de l'École des Jeunes de langues', *Mémoires de l'Institut de France*, 38, 2 (1911), 267–350 ; 276.

3 Voir E. Driault, *L'Expédition de Crète et de Morée (1823-1828)* (Le Caire, 1930), où sont publiées des dépêches de Drovetti, consul général et de Malivoire. Ainsi, c'est lui qui écrit du Caire, le 4 avril 1826 au ministre des Affaires étrangères, le baron de Damas, au sujet d'une quarantaine de jeunes Egyptiens que le Pacha d'Egypte désirait envoyer étudier en France, voir Y. Laissus, *Jomard, le dernier Egyptien* (Paris, 2004).

1829—à Alep.<sup>4</sup> Il mourut le 6 septembre 1840. Il avait épousé en 1833 Adèle de Butet, d'une famille consulaire elle aussi, et son fils Victor-Etienne (1834-1906) fera également carrière dans la diplomatie après avoir étudié le turc à l'École royale des Jeunes de langues de Paris.<sup>5</sup>

Etienne de Malivoire séjournait à Bagdad depuis quelques années alors que Jean-François-Xavier Rousseau (1738–1808), originaire d'Ispahan, y était arrivé comme consul de France en mai 1795,<sup>6</sup> date à laquelle le consulat de Bassora y avait été transféré, conformément à ses souhaits.<sup>7</sup> Rousseau connaissait parfaitement les affaires de Perse et était en excellents termes avec le pacha ottoman. Bien que nommé consul par Louis XVI en septembre 1781, Rousseau avait été maintenu à son poste par le nouveau régime et semble, après avoir prêté le serment demandé, s'être plus ou moins accommodé de la nouvelle situation.<sup>8</sup> Le déclenchement de la campagne d'Égypte entraîna cependant son arrestation le 9 octobre 1798 et son exil jusqu'en septembre 1799 à Mardin. Malivoire fut certainement en rapport avec Rousseau à Bagdad.

C'est quelques mois avant cette arrestation que Malivoire écrit, de Bagdad, le 8 mai 1798, une lettre à l'Internonce impérial et royal, représentant de l'empereur d'Autriche François II à la Sublime Porte, Bartholomé de Testa (1723–1809), dont un extrait se trouve conservé en copie au Staatsarchiv de Vienne, dans le fonds *Persica*.<sup>9</sup> Depuis la paix de Sistow en 1791 les rapports entre les Habsbourg et la Porte étaient apaisés. Cette lettre fait allusion à une correspondance suivie entre Testa, qui appartenait à une ancienne famille aristocratique

4 Voir par exemple Joseph-François Michaud, *Correspondance d'Orient (1830–1831)* (Bruxelles, 1841), où est publiée (pp. 23–6) une lettre de Malivoire alors qu'il était consul de France à Alep.

5 Voir la mention de son nom dans les manuscrits Paris, Bibliothèque universitaire des langues et civilisations (BULAC), MS Turc 117, fols. 151 et 152.

6 Sur le consulat de Bagdad et la situation générale au Levant après la destitution et l'exil de l'ambassadeur Choiseul-Gouffier en Russie, à cette époque, voir A. Faivre d'Acier, 'Le service consulaire au Levant à la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle et son évolution sous la Révolution', dans *La fonction consulaire à l'époque moderne, l'affirmation d'une institution économique et politique (1500–1800)*, ed. J. Ilbert et G. Le Bouëdec (Rennes, 2006).

7 Rousseau avait été avant la Révolution chargé des consulats de Bassora et Bagdad. Ainsi c'est de Bagdad en 1787 puis, à nouveau, en 1790 que Jean-François Rousseau et son jeune fils Joseph écrivent à Pierre Ruffin qui enseignait le persan au Collège royal à Paris. Ces lettres sont conservées dans BULAC, MS Persan 112. Dans une lettre d'octobre 1787 J.-F. Rousseau parle des affaires de Perse et d'un voyage qu'il envisage de faire à Ispahan.

8 Rousseau est par ailleurs un homme fort instruit, collectionneur de manuscrits. Voir aussi H. Dehérain, 'Jean François Rousseau, agent de la Compagnie des Indes, consul et orientaliste (1738–1808)', *Journal des Savants*, 8 (1927), 355–70, et R. Pluchet, *L'extraordinaire voyage d'un botaniste en Perse : André Michaux—1782–1785* (Toulouse, 2014).

9 Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, MS Persica 1, fols. 11r–12r.

génoise établie au Levant<sup>10</sup> et était depuis les alentours de 1849 au service de l'Empire, et le secrétaire de Smith. Il s'agit d'un témoignage intéressant sur la situation persane durant cette période fort troublée.<sup>11</sup>

Extrait d'une lettre de M. Malivoire à l'Internonce impérial et royal en date Bagdad le 8<sup>e</sup> mai 1798 :

Par la lettre du 31 mars dernier que j'ai eu l'honneur d'écrire à V.E., elle aura observé que la Perse, presque entièrement soumise à l'usurpateur actuel, semblait devoir jouir pour quelque temps au moins du repos que promet un règne doux et humain. De nouveaux troubles viennent d'y éclater ; Mehmed Han,<sup>12</sup> neveu du fameux Kerim Han,<sup>13</sup> dévoré de la passion de dominer, se montre aussi entreprenant qu'audacieux dans les moyens qu'il emploie pour appuyer ses droits à l'empire. Par des nouvelles très fraîches d'Ispahan, on annonce qu'à la tête de trois cent cavaliers seulement, il s'est emparé de cette ville. Il a profité de l'absence du Han Hussein pour se frayer un chemin jusqu'à cette ville où il est entré sans coup férir. Son premier soin a été de s'emparer du trésor public dans lequel il y avait 4000 Tomans de 15. Piastres chaque, qu'il a fait accompagner de suite à son armée, qu'il avait laissé à une journée environ distante de la ville. Par séduction et à force d'argent, il s'est fait aussi un grand nombre de partisans qui seront autant de défenseur(s) des droits de la famille de Kerim Han à la couronne. L'on ne croit cependant pas qu'il soit encore assez puissant pour oser se déclarer maître d'Ispahan, et quoiqu'il y fût encore, on suppose qu'après avoir enlevé toutes les richesses qu'il y trouvera, il se retirera de nouveaux [sic] vers la province où il lui est plus facile de se défendre. Cette heureuse irruption est d'un grand secours pour lui par les ressources infinies qu'il pourra s'y procurer, soit en hommes, soit en argent. Ses partisans se multiplieront en progression de ses facultés, et se trouvant à même de les contenter, il n'aura pas de peine à grossir son parti ; il en aura d'autant moins qu'il jouit déjà de l'affection des peuples et qu'il a en sa faveur un préjugé qui fait regarder comme

10 M. de Testa et A. Gautier, *Drogmans et diplomates européens auprès de la Porte ottomane* (Istanbul, 2003), pp. 129–47, 187–90, 361–77, 379–99, 401–19.

11 Deux ans plus tôt, en 1796, deux savants voyageurs français, Olivier et Bruguière, avaient fait étape à Bagdad à leur retour de Perse ; voir P. Bernard, 'Le voyage dans l'Empire othoman, l'Égypte et la Perse de Guillaume-Antoine Olivier, naturaliste et envoyé de la République (1792–1798)', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 141.4 (1997), 1157–244.

12 Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār (1742–1797) fondateur de la dynastie Qājār.

13 Karīm Khān Zand mourut en mars 1779.

d'un mauvais augure pour le païs que deux membres de la même famille se succèdent immédiatement à la couronne. Cette opinion très accréditée parmi les Persans peut être très favorable à sa cause, et rendre la domination de Baba Han<sup>14</sup> fort précaire. Celui-ci justement alarmé des progrès de son [fol. 11v] ennemi songerait à les réprimer, si un danger plus imminent ne réclamait sa soli[ci]tude tout entière. Soit par un effet de l'opinion contraire à son règne, comme étant neveu du dernier souverain, soit par un complot de son rival, ses jours viennent d'être l'objet de l'attentat de certaines personnes qui ont été découvertes, et qui ont dévoilé le fil d'une conspiration tramée contre lui dont tous les auteurs n'étaient pas encore connus. Il ne songe dans ce moment-ci qu'à les découvrir et à punir l'audace de ceux qui ont trempé dans ce délit. Pendant plusieurs jours le bruit a courru (sic) qu'il avait succombé aux coups dirigés contre lui mais des lettres venues depuis et des personnes mêmes ont assuré que les conspirateurs avaient échoué dans leurs desseins.

Les troupes destinées à marcher contre les Muhabbis [sic] ont déjà commencé à se mettre en marche,<sup>15</sup> mais la saison des chaleurs qui rend le désert impraticable ne leur permettra pas de s'éloigner beaucoup ; le but de leur sortie est plutôt pour préserver certains endroits d'une incursion de cette horde d'Arabe que pour aller les attaquer ; l'expédition projetée contre eux ne pourra avoir lieu qu'au mois de septembre à cause des chaleurs brûlantes qui règnent ici jusqu'à cette époque. En attendant, le Pascha a déjà envoyé contre eux des Arabes de la tribu des Gazaels, qui les inquiéteront [fol. 12r] d'autant plus qu'il existe entre eux une haine de religion provenant de ce que les Muhabbis professent un culte naturel qui tient du déisme pur, affectent un souverain mépris pour le Prophète si révééré des vrais sunnis. L'animosité que cette différence d'opinions religieuses nourrit entre eux est si acharnée qu'ils sont continuellement en état de guerre : quoique les Muhabbis soient plus forts, cependant ils devaient redouter un ennemi animé de la forme du fanatisme qui ne trouve de vengeance susceptible de calmer sa haine que dans la destruction de celui qui l'a fait naître. Jusqu'à présent il ne s'est rien passé entre eux et il serait même possible qu'ils ne se rencontrassent pas, parce que les Muhabbis ont évacué les endroits qu'ils avaient pris sur la rive gauche

14 Le futur Fath 'Ali Shāh Qājār, qui était gouverneur du Fārs et qui changera son nom après son couronnement en 1797

15 Ce paragraphe est un témoignage fort important, vu sa date, sur les débuts du Wahhābisme, antérieur à l'attaque de Karbalā en 1801. Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, fils de Jean-François, évoquera ce pillage dans sa *Description du Pachalik de Bagdad* (Paris, 1817) ; le raid eut alors lieu à la suite d'une querelle avec la tribu des Hazā'il chiites.

du fleuve pour passer de l'autre côté, de sorte qu'ils sont séparés actuellement les uns des autres par le fleuve.

Dans le même recueil du Staatsarchiv de Vienne se trouve, aux fols. 7r à 8v, un autre extrait de lettre ou de rapport intitulé '3<sup>o</sup> note. Suite du règne de Mehmed Han'. L'auteur est très certainement Jean-François Rousseau, dont on sait<sup>16</sup> qu'il avait séjourné à la cour de Karīm Khān Zand à Shīrāz en 1758 et son contenu ressemble étroitement à celui de la lettre de Rousseau à l'ambassadeur français à Constantinople du 8 mars 1796.<sup>17</sup> Dans une note du fol. 2 du volume *Persica 1*, il est dit en effet que l'auteur a pu faire connaissance d'Āghā Muḥammad Qājār au temps où celui-ci était otage à la cour de Karīm Khān Zand dans deux voyages différents qu'il fit à Shīrāz à la Cour de Karīm Khān en 1768 et 1770 et 'Mehmed Han jouissait des bonnes grâces de Kerim Han et était admis à ses conseils et à ses plaisirs'.

Voici cet extrait (fol. 7) :

3<sup>o</sup> note. Suite du règne de Mehmed Han.

Ayant laissé une partie de [fol. 7v] son armée continuer le siège de Chouché,<sup>18</sup> Mehmed Han marcha sur Erivan, et battit complètement les troupes du Han de cette ville et les Géorgiens commandés par le fils du prince Héraclius<sup>19</sup> dont il a été déjà fait mention ; à la suite de cette victoire le Han d'Erivan est venu se rendre à discrétion, et Mehmed Han est entré triomphant dans cette ville. La nouvelle en étant parvenue à Tiflis, le prince Héraclius, effrayé du danger qui le menaçait, dénué d'espérances, de secours, et se voyant dans l'impossibilité de résister, prit la résolution d'évacuer la place, et se retira accompagné des principaux de la ville à Kakhet,<sup>20</sup> petite ville de Géorgie située aux confins de la Circassie. D'après cela il semblerait que Mehmed Han n'avait qu'à se présenter devant Tiflis pour s'en rendre maître ; mais les habitants tant Géorgiens qu'Arméniens et quelques sunnis ayant appelé à leur secours quinze à dix-huit mille Lesquis, firent une résistance opiniâtre. Il fallut que Mehmed Han attaquât la ville avec toutes ses forces, et ce n'a été qu'après plusieurs actions sanglantes qu'elle a été prise d'assaut. Ses troupes y ont exercé toutes les horreurs que la guerre, la fureur et le désordre d'une armée effrénée peuvent inspirer. Par son

16 Dehérain, 'Rousseau', p. 358.

17 Dont des extraits sont publiés *ibid.*, p. 366.

18 Dont le siège dure de juillet à août 1795.

19 Erekle II, roi de Kakhetie et de Kartli, pratiquement indépendant depuis 1762, mais sous la protection des Russes, mort en 1798.

20 Probablement à Sighnaghi ou à Telavi.



ordre plus de trente églises chrétiennes et deux mosquées de sunnis ont été démolies, les maisons ont été livrées au pillage et aux flammes.<sup>21</sup> Non content de ces cruautés qui peuvent à peine se concevoir, il fit esclaves plus de quarante mille individus [fol. 8] tant Géorgiens qu'Arméniens et Mahométans sunnis. Tout [sic] ces esclaves ont été envoyés et dispersés dans l'intérieur de la Perse, et l'on assure qu'un grand nombre a péri de misère, ou par les cruautés et les violences qu'ils ont essuyées.

Pendant que Mehmed Han était en marche contre Tiflis, le Pascha d'Erzeroum, qui est ser asker ou généralissime du Grand Seigneur, et ceux de Kars et d'Akalsike [Akhaltzikhe] avaient expédié des Tartars avec des lettres à Héraclius pour l'encourager à tenir bon, en lui promettant de prompts secours. Les Tartars avec un Aga de considération de Kars ont été arrêtés et conduits devant Mehmed Han, qui sans aucune forme de procès leur a fait trancher la tête. Lorsque ces divers Paschas ont appris que Mehmed Han avait pris Tiflis, et soumis tous les environs, ils lui ont envoyé des présents et divers officiers de distinction pour le féliciter de ses conquêtes. Le fier Persan reçut tous ces hommages comme autant de tributs dûs à sa grandeur. Son expédition dans le nord de la Perse n'alla pas plus en avant ;<sup>22</sup> il regagna au contraire le sud de la Perse et passa avec sa formidable armée, que l'on évalue à deux cents mille hommes, dans les plaines de Tschol Mozan,<sup>23</sup> qui est à ce que l'on assure, le pays le plus beau, le plus fertile et le plus abondant de la Perse pour la nourriture des hommes et les fourrages, quoique Tschol signifie désert. De là il a envoyé des ordres [fol. 8v] dans toute la Perse, pour que l'on y fit des levées de troupes, et que l'on y ramassât toutes sortes de munitions de guerre et de bouche. Parmi les plans que l'on suppose qu'il machine, et qui donnent lieu à tant de préparatifs, l'on conjecture trois choses, qu'il peut avoir en vue ; l'une de se tenir dans le Nord de la Perse avec toutes ses forces pour s'opposer aux Lesquis ou aux Russes, qui ont commencé à remuer dans cette partie, comptant pour rien le prince Héraclius, que l'on regarde comme soumis tout à fait à la Perse ; l'autre qu'il a le dessein de se rendre dans le Corassan, où l'on assure qu'il est invité, pour se faire maître de cette province et des trésors de Charok Schah petit-fils

21 L'incendie de Tbilissi après la bataille décisive qui eut lieu le 11 septembre en 1795 par les armées Āghā Muḥammad Khān est suivi de la restauration du pouvoir persan sur ces provinces.

22 Une note copiée au bas du fol. 4 indique 'Le Scheihul Islam d'Ispahan, qui est arrivé à Bagdad dernièrement a assuré que le prince Heraclius et le Han d'Erivan étaient en négociation avec Mehmed Han pour se soumettre moyennent une contribution et le tribut annuel ordinaire.' Il s'agit probablement du même épisode.

23 La steppe de Moghān en Azerbaïdjan.

de Nader Schah ;<sup>24</sup> le troisième enfin, qu'il veut attaquer les Turcs, et ajouter à ses conquêtes Bagdad et Bassora.

Suit au fol. 8v une '4<sup>o</sup> note', certainement tirée d'une autre lettre, postérieure de peu, sans doute encore en 1798 :

4<sup>o</sup> note. Il vient de se passer plusieurs événements de la plus grande importance pour ce royaume, entre autres l'assassinat de Mehmed Han devant Chouché ;<sup>25</sup> l'irruption des Russes dans les provinces de Guilan et Schirwan, et leur retraite aussi imprévue qu'extraordinaire. La mort de Mehmed Han avait été tramée par un général nommé Zadé Han Chahakni ; après cette catastrophe le gros de son armée nombreuse sous la conduite des généraux se retira à Tahiran.<sup>26</sup> La nouvelle en étant parvenue à Baba Han Serdar, neveu dudit Mehmed Han, qui pour lors était à Schiraz, il se rendit avec un grand empressement à Tahiran, et comme les [fol. 9] Ministres, les officiers, et toute l'armée connaissaient sa valeur, et sa capacité, ils le proclamèrent d'une voix (sic) unanime souverain de la Perse, à l'exclusion des deux frères de Mehmed Han. Cet événement s'est passé l'automne dernier en 1797 ; après la proclamation de Baba Han trois autres prétendants se mirent en évidence, et il semblait au premier aspect que la Perse allait à nouveau être désolée par des guerres civiles ; mais par la bonne conduite de Baba Han, l'affection des troupes pour lui, sa vigilance et son activité, il a su se faire reconnaître de presque toute la Perse, et aujourd'hui tout ce vaste royaume lui est soumis, excepté quelques petites parties dont il va être question.

L'un des prétendants, qui est l'assassin de l'Eunuque, est Sadé Han Schahakni,<sup>27</sup> qui voyant que la plus grande partie des troupes ainsi que les Hans et les Vezirs s'étaient soumis à Baba Han, abandonna le projet qu'il avait d'abord conçu, de se déclarer chef de parti à Tauris, et reconnut la puissance de Baba Han, à qui il remit dans le même temps toutes les richesses, soit en argent, soit en effets précieux, qu'il avait saisis, et surtout les diamants, dont les plus beaux ont été apportés du Mogol par Nadir Schah. Tout le district d'Adarbeidgean est sous la domination du souverain actuel de la Perse.

24 Après la campagne de Géorgie, Āghā Muḥammad Khān se rendit en effet au Khorassan et fit subir moult sévices à Shāhrokh Shāh.

25 Il est assassiné le 17 juin 1797 dans son campement, après la prise de la ville de Choucha au Karabagh.

26 En 1778, Āghā Muḥammad Khān avait fait de Téhéran sa capitale.

27 D'après le *Farsnāme-ye Nāserī* de Hasan Fasā'ī l'un des assassins était un Géorgien nommé Sādeq et le second un domestique appelé Khodādād Esfahānī, le troisième 'Abbās Māzanderānī et Sādeq Khān Shaghāghī était un émir qui avait auparavant pris la défense de ceux qui devaient assassiner le shāh.

[fol. 9v] Mehmed Han avait trois frères,<sup>28</sup> l'un nommé Mourtaza Koulihan, fugitif depuis très long-temps chez les Russes à Astracan, un autre nommé Riza Koulihan, qui après la mort de l'Eunuque a beaucoup remué dans le Corasan, pour se faire un parti, mais en ayant reconnu l'impossibilité, il s'est sauvé près de Begui, roi actuel de Bohara,<sup>29</sup> où il est en sûreté ; le troisième Aly Kouli Han se trouvait à Tahiran lorsque l'assassinat de son frère eut lieu. Son neveu Baba Han l'aurait sans doute laissé vivre tranquille à cause de son grand âge, et de son peu de capacité ; mais comme il s'est permis plusieurs discours imprudents contre lui, il lui a fait ôter les yeux et le tient à Tahiran. Le concurrent le plus redoutable pour Baba Han est le neveu de Kerim Han, nommé Mehmed Han, qui se trouvait à Bouchais [=Bouchehr ?] lorsqu'il apprit l'assassinat de l'Eunuque. Sans argent, sans ressource, il partit aussitôt pour le Lorestan avec l'intention de s'y faire un parti. Il est parvenu à fortifier Beban [Behbehân], ville peu distante du Golphe, ensuite avec six mille hommes il se dirigea contre Schiraz ; dans sa route il rencontra Kutschuk Han frère de Baba Han à la tête de plus de 15 000 hommes, et avec sa faible troupe composée en partie d'aventuriers, il le défit, et lui tua plus de la moitié de son armée. Cependant après et malgré cette victoire, il n'a pu s'emparer de Schiraz, et il s'est retiré vers [fol. 10] le Sud de la Perse, où il intrigue tant qu'il peut, mais comme toutes ses ressources sont dans son courage, il est difficile qu'il parvienne à se rendre formidable.

Baba Han est respecté et reconnu actuellement comme le seul maître de la Perse tant en dedans du Païs qui lui est soumis que de toutes les puissances limitrophes et voisines. C'est un homme âgé d'environ trente-six ans, d'une taille avantageuse, et bien fait ; bon guerrier, et habile général. Autant son oncle était cruel et avare, autant celui-ci est humain et généreux. Les soldats lui sont attachés, le peuple l'affectionne, ainsi il est probable qu'il gouverne paisiblement, à moins qu'il n'ait l'ambition d'attaquer ses voisins pour faire des conquêtes. Il a déclaré qu'il ne prétendait des provinces de la Perse pendant dix ans que les deux tiers des contributions imposées par son oncle. Il y a deux mois qu'il a envoyé le cadavre de son oncle dans un cercueil d'argent doré accompagné d'un grand appareil funèbre et d'environ mille cinq cents cavaliers pour qu'il soit inhumé avec pompe à Imam Aly, petite ville en grande vénération parmi eux et distante de Bagdad d'environ douze lieues. Ce souverain fait continuer à grands frais les bâtisses des mosquées et collèges que son oncle avait fait

28 Il s'agit de Morteza Quli Khân, protégé de Catherine II qui était établi en Russie, de Reza Quli Khân et de 'Ali Quli Khân.

29 Sans doute à la cour de Shâh Murâd ibn Daniyal Bey.

commencer dans les environs [fol. 10v].<sup>30</sup> D'après cet état actuel de la Perse il paraît qu'elle restera long-tems tranquille à moins que les Russes ne les attaquent de nouveau, ou que Mehmed Zecki Han ne se forme un parti assez puissant pour oser prétendre à la souveraineté ?

Il y a dans ces feuillets deux autres petits paragraphes en rapport avec la situation de la Perse durant ces années charnières, mais leur auteur, assurément l'un de ces deux correspondants de Bagdad, Malivoire ou Rousseau, n'est pas indiqué.

Au fol. 4v figure ainsi un rappel de la 'Situation actuelle de la Province de Corasan' :

Nadir Schah ayant été tué par l'intrigue et la trahison de son cousin Aly Kouly Han<sup>31</sup>, celui-ci lui succéda à la Royauté sous le nom d'Aly Schah ou d'Adel Schah ; il fut environ un an après détrôné et tué par son frère Ibrahim Schah, qui ne régna qu'un an aussi ; car l'armée s'étant révoltée, il fut tué et l'on proclama roi Scharok Schah, qui était à Machad, qui est petit fils de Nadir Schah, et qui par sa mère descend des rois séfévis ; mais sa [fol. 5] grande jeunesse et la faiblesse de son caractère replongèrent la Perse dans les horreurs des guerres intestines.

Et par ailleurs (fol. 4r-v)

Nadir Schah à son retour de l'Inde fit garnir en dehors le grand dôme de la mosquée d'Imam Aly,<sup>32</sup> ainsi que les minarets en briques de cuivre dorés d'or moulu. Mehmed Han, à l'instar dudit conquérant, depuis trois ans a fait fabriquer à Ca[c]han deux cent mille briques de cuivre également dorés d'or moulu, et en a fait garnir le dehors de la mosquée d'Imam Hussein, ville sur l'Euphrate,<sup>33</sup> ainsi que les dômes d'Imam Moussa,<sup>34</sup> petite ville à une grande lieue de Bagdad. Mirza Mourtaza, Scheihul Islam d'Ispahan, qui était ici dernièrement,<sup>35</sup> a été envoyé par Mehmed Han pour mettre la dernière main et acheter [sic] ces imposants et magnifiques bâtiments.

Ces nouvelles, qui étaient transmises à la Cour de Vienne par l'internonce de Constantinople montrent que la Double Monarchie était attentive aux événements qui agitaient la Perse à la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Elles parvenaient en

30 Fath 'Ali Shāh fit restaurer et embellir les sanctuaires chiites d'Iraq et de Mashhad.

31 En 1747.

32 A Mashhad.

33 Karbalā

34 La mosquée al-Kadhimiya

35 Comparer note 22, ci-dessus.

Europe avec un certain retard là aussi. Elles avaient une extrême importance pour la conduite des affaires européennes dans le contexte des guerres de la Révolution française, à la veille de l'expédition d'Égypte.

Il est également intéressant de voir comment les événements de Perse étaient vus depuis Bagdad, non sans quelque retard, par des hommes qui, comme Rousseau et Malivoire, recevaient des informations directes, généralement exactes. Le rôle des anciens jeunes de langues ou des hommes nés, comme Rousseau, au Levant, informateurs privilégiés, en lien étroit avec les diplomates des différentes puissances représentées à Constantinople, est à souligner.<sup>36</sup> Lorsque Fath 'Alī Shāh tentera d'établir des alliances avec les pays européens, avec la France notamment (1804), ce sera chose assez aisée. Il jouissait déjà auprès des lecteurs de ces lettres d'une réputation bien établie de souverain capable.

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36 Alastair Hamilton a montré à de multiples reprises le rôle irremplaçable joué par tous ces personnages dont certains sont aujourd'hui injustement oubliés.

## Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq in England: 1848–1856

*Tarif Khalidi*

### 1

On the morning of Saturday, 2 September 1848, a Lebanese Christian man of letters called Faris (later Ahmad Faris) al-Shidyaq travelled by sea with his wife from Malta to England, and after several stops on the way, sailed up the Thames and arrived in London on 29 September. Shidyaq had lived for several years in Malta, working with Protestant missionaries as a teacher of Arabic and assistant in their printing press. Now, aged forty-three, he had received a major commission from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) to work with Dr Samuel Lee, Sir Thomas Adams's Professor of Arabic at Cambridge, on an Arabic translation of the Bible. He would later record his years in England in two vastly different travel accounts: *Al-Saq 'ala al-saq* ('Leg over Leg'), which now exists in a splendid English translation,<sup>1</sup> and *Kashf al-mukhabba' 'an funun Urubba* ('Unveiling the Hidden Culture of Europe'), which eagerly awaits its translator.

A much travelled man, he was to live for many years in Egypt, Malta, England, France, Tunis and finally in Constantinople, where he became a distinguished founder-editor of a semi-official Arabic journal called *al-Jawā'ib*. A man of many parts, he was also a man of many sects, from Maronite to Protestant to Muslim. Pioneer political journalist, consummate philologist, celebrated translator of the Bible, friend to men of power, acute social observer and reformer, dogged controversialist and a man of wicked wit, perhaps the nearest figure we can compare him to in the classical period is al-Jahiz (d. 869). Recognition of his centrality to modern Arabic literature has come slowly. Today, however, we are in a far better position to assess and appreciate his intellectual achievements than we were even two or three decades ago.<sup>2</sup> We may now confidently call Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq the *enfant terrible* of the *Nahda*, or 'Renaissance', of Arabic culture in the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, *Leg Over Leg*, trans. H. Davies (New York etc., 2013).

<sup>2</sup> See the 'Forward' by R. C. Johnson, *ibid.*, for a broad survey of Shidyaq's life and works, which cites many modern works on him.

That *Nahda* had two initial parents, Beirut and Cairo. When it began and when it ended are points of debate in modern scholarship, but the nineteenth century was clearly its apogee. Deep social changes had come over these two cities which one might summarize by saying that the traditional purveyors of knowledge, the Muslim *ʿUlama* and the Christian clergy, were being crowded out by a new class whom one might call the new intellectuals: the doctors, lawyers, teachers and journalists spawned by newly centralizing states and new institutions. This was the class to which al-Shidyaq belonged.

The traditional markets were likewise being invaded by a new commercial and manufacturing class, with strong ties to Europe. With this came the gradual spread of a print culture which conveyed ideas to a much wider public through the medium of scientific books, novels, plays and journals. The eventual result was an atmosphere richer in ideas and ideologies and arguably more optimistic than before, where contacts, direct and indirect, with the Mediterranean and European worlds were becoming routine.

If the *Nahda* marks in its early days what has been called the ‘beginnings of modernization’<sup>3</sup> in the Arab East, something needs to be added here on this slippery term, especially where it concerns Shidyaq. Modern *Nahda* scholarship of the last forty years or so appears to have swung from regarding modernization as being largely a Europe-inspired cultural process to one that involved a conversation with the self as much as it was with Europe.<sup>4</sup> What distinguishes the modernization processes associated with the *Nahda* of the nineteenth century from similar movements of earlier days is that it was not only carried out largely by a new bourgeoisie, the new intellectuals described above, but also distinguished by the fact, very relevant to the case of Shidyaq, that modernization was an inter-sectarian movement of Muslims and Christians. These new intellectuals tended to be secular thinkers, but often, like Shidyaq, steeped in two religious traditions, who proceeded to target the hitherto dominant position of their respective religious clerics and to take on the intellectual establishment in general.

The rhetoric of modernization expressed itself best perhaps in the gradual disappearance of the traditional distinction between elite (*al-khassa*) and commoners (*al-ʿamma*). In the traditional view, culture had long been regarded as an affair by and for the elite. Now in the nineteenth century the new

3 See W.R. Polk and R.L. Chambers, eds., *The Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East* (Chicago, 1968).

4 See Johnson’s ‘Forward’ to *al-Shidyaq, Leg Over Leg*. See also, e.g., C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World* (Oxford, 2004), who argues, *inter alia*, that nationalism (a major ideology of the *Nahda*) was a spontaneous phenomenon in many parts of the world and not, by and large, Europe-inspired.

intellectuals attempt increasingly to woo the commoners, attract them, incite them, as if these commoners are, after all, educable. In many of his writings, Shidyaq was in effect inviting the commoners to make fun of the elite.

If one glances at the rhetoric of these new intellectuals, a number of registers and moods might be detected. There is, to begin with, a rhetoric of finality: this and only this principle, dogma or doctrine will guarantee progress. For Shidyaq, provided one catches him in a down-to-earth mood, that principle is justice manifested in social equality.<sup>5</sup> Another rhetorical register is detectable when the new intellectuals converse with Europe: a rhetoric of forearming themselves with the rationalist/humanist elements of their own cultural traditions. For Shidyaq, as will be seen later at greater length, this meant total immersion in classical lexicography and the classical literary canon and as much of the European literary canon as necessary. One must come to the negotiating table with Europe ready for a debate *inter pares*.

Another rhetorical mood is the call for education conjoined in the case of Shidyaq with the call for the equality of women. For the new intellectuals, education seems to have a far wider relevance than mere school education and to include a sort of moral rearmament, a transformation of personality. It is an education *for* certain things, e.g., citizenship and equality but also *against* others, e.g., blind obedience to authority, political or religious. In *Leg over Leg*, Shidyaq's views on women are most vividly put into the mouth of his pseudonymous wife, al-Fariyaqiyya, who vigorously and wittily resists the sexual and social powerlessness of women, and builds an extraordinary case for the social equality of women and their psychological needs, unparalleled among the modernists of the *Nahda*.<sup>6</sup>

Arguably the most salient aspect of Shidyaq's rhetoric of modernity is the way 'in which language comes to be about language, taking itself as the object of its own inquiry'.<sup>7</sup> He does so by turning the Arabic language inside out. Commanding an extraordinary lexical and morphological mastery of the language, he seems, in *Leg over Leg*, to be tossing it up into the air, then to catch it as it descends in a cascade of synonyms, at once very learned and very irreverent. It

5 See, e.g., *Al-Saq 'ala al-saq fi ma huwwa al-Fariyaq* (Paris, 1855; reprinted Beirut, n.d., p. 592 (hereafter *Al-Saq*)), discussing the hugely disproportionate lot of rich and poor in England. For other *Nahda* thinkers, it was modern science or the fight against superstition or parliamentary government or the struggle against blind imitation of authority or the supremacy of law or some other formula for progress. In each case, that formula is self-evident, urgent, utterly necessary. Shidyaq was open to many of these ideas.

6 See especially *Al-Saq*, pp. 501–6, 529–37, 571–7 and passim. The translations throughout are my own and somewhat free.

7 The quotation is from T. Eagleton 'An Octopus at the Window', *London Review of Books* 33.10 (19 May 2011), 23–4.



is simultaneously a celebration of the Arabic language, which he consistently calls 'noble', and a parody of it. Perhaps one ought to consider irreverence *à la* Shidyaq as an important component of literary modernism.

Modern studies of Shidyaq have suggested a number of literary parallels to *Leg over Leg*, the most frequently cited being *Tristram Shandy* and the *Maqamat* genre in classical Arabic literature. Shidyaq was familiar with the first and uses the word *maqama* as a heading for several chapters in *Leg over Leg*. Both parallels are apt but both are also inadequate. Like *Tristram Shandy*, Shidyaq in *Leg over Leg* goes on a psychedelic trip where autobiography is wrapped inside a stream of consciousness alternately burlesque, rollicking, iconoclastic, absurd, lecherous and persistently satirical. Like the *Maqamat*, Shidyaq's *Leg over Leg* is a series of discrete episodes, only vaguely chronological, in which verbal fireworks hide the designs of the devious protagonist as he moves from one duped assembly to the next. Yet we hear in Shidyaq, and especially in his two very different accounts of England, a range of voice and register much wider than either of the two parallels cited above and transcending mere influence. To quote Fredric Jameson on another 'original', Gabriel Garcia Marquez: 'Influence is not a kind of copying; it is permission unexpectedly received to do things in new ways, to broach new content, to tell stories by way of forms you never knew you were allowed to use.'<sup>8</sup> To these two accounts of England we now turn.

## 2

Shidyaq's account of his English years in *Leg over Leg* is shorter and earlier than in his *Unveiling the Hidden Culture of Europe*. The first work was published in Paris in 1855, towards the end of his English stay; the second was first published in Tunis in 1862 then revised and republished in Constantinople in 1881.

His description of England occurs near the end of *Leg over Leg* and immediately preceding his description of Paris. The tone throughout the work is predominantly burlesque, and though outwardly an autobiographical narration, is consistently subversive of narrative. If anything can be said to tie together the convoluted digressions and recondite allusions, it would be the bursts of synonyms that appear like mock inventories of the classical language and often in mock rhymed prose.

This mood or register is maintained when Shidyaq comes to his English days, making his account unlike any other Arabic (or perhaps Asian) travel-

<sup>8</sup> See F. Jameson 'No Magic, No Metaphor', *London Review of Books* 39.12 (15 June 2017), 21–32.

ogue to Europe in the nineteenth century. Much of his account of England is set in the form of rapid-fire exchanges between Shidyayq's protagonist and alter ego, al-Fariyaq, and his wife. The tone is set in one of his earliest observations of England:

The English are, of all peoples, the most fond of titles. When a foreigner visits them, and he is called an Emir, or Shaykh or Bishop he will be received by them with the utmost respect, especially if he speaks French.<sup>9</sup>

That little twist at the end about speaking French is typical of remarks that he inserts here and there as if they were innocent afterthoughts or winks to his readers.

However, foreigners walking around in their national dress, the fez in the case of Shidyayq, will produce laughter in English streets, while the urchins in London will 'call you from a distance until hoarse only to say to you: "Damned, bloody, foreigner!"' His days in Cambridge are satirized in verse:

My long travels finally dumped me in Cambridge  
Where I'd stay home all day, fearing the taunts of the rabble.  
As night fell, I'd leave my house in peace of mind, like a bat.  
Dogs would come to sniff my coat,  
I'd shoo them away, but to no effect.  
They bark and bite to tear my skin and coat,  
As if that coat was made from their ancestors' skin.

This is immediately juxtaposed to a story about a rich Englishman who was interested in Oriental languages and, learning of Shidyayq's/Fariyaq's presence in Cambridge, invited him to his mansion, where he showed him the greatest kindness and hospitality.<sup>10</sup> This salon/street, upper/lower class, rich/poor perspective forms the general contour of the social map which Shidyayq draws of England and which can be glimpsed throughout, hidden beneath the ribaldry and the *joie d'écrire*. It also frames his balancing act between the virtues and the vices of the English. Two classes, however, excite his deepest reactions: the peasants and industrial workers, on the one hand, and English women servants and prostitutes, on the other. He will often insist that the counterparts of these classes in his own country are much better off and much happier.

<sup>9</sup> *Al-Saq*, p. 498.

<sup>10</sup> For the *tarboush*, the verses about Cambridge and the invitation by the rich Englishman, *ibid.*, p. 548; for the London urchins, *ibid.*, p. 640.

He describes his days in the village of Barley, in Hertfordshire, where he first settled, as ‘the most wretched and most ill-omened days of his life’. This was not just because an infant son of his died tragically in that village for lack of proper medical care but also because the village peasants lead an existence far worse than the peasants of his own land:

If you observe closely those peasants who live around, you will see no difference at all between them and the savages. Each morning the peasant will depart to toil and labour all day only to come home at night, seeing no one and seen by none. He is like some machine that turns and turns, with no profit to itself when it turns, and no rest when it stops. When Sunday comes around, a day of joy and merriment in all countries, his only lucky break is to go to church. There, he will stay for two hours like a statue, alternately yawning and nodding off before he goes home. The only rich people in the countryside are the priest and the bailiff, but they too are no better than the peasants.

The same may be said of workers and craftsmen who forge and produce those sumptuous furnishings and wonderful objects of art found in the houses of the rich. They manufacture all these luxuries but are themselves denied them. This leads ShidyAQ/Fariyaq to a diatribe against the London rich:

Perhaps the rich imagine that God created the poor only in order to serve them. But let me tell you: the rich need the poor more than the poor need the rich. Or could it be that the rich disdain to look down from their lofty heights upon the lower classes for fear that they be contaminated by their poverty? Or perhaps on such heights, a downward glance might give them vertigo? If they fear that kindness to the poor will result in their corruption, they should fear their hatred even more. For wretchedness is more likely to lead to corruption than happiness.<sup>11</sup>

The ribaldry here is temporarily suspended, though not the irony. But the subject that truly obsessed him was English women. In very many places he praises their beauty in terms that are clearly lecherous, to which are frequently appended long strings of adjectives and synonyms:

<sup>11</sup> For peasants and workers and the diatribe against the rich, *ibid.*, pp. 591–3. This chapter of the work is headed ‘Philosophical Reflections’, perhaps an echo of Voltaire’s *Lettres philosophiques*, a work ShidyAQ knew well and often quotes in his *Unveiling*.

You will see an English woman walking, turning her face away, holding herself aloof, striding earnestly, hurrying as if escaping from somewhere, swaggering, hasty, skipping, quickly disappearing, neck stretched forward, eyes fully open, with sidelong glances ...

This is followed by some forty synonyms describing her walk and ends with the onlooker barely able to stand, his knees knocking together in admiration of the sight, trailed by some twenty synonyms for heart palpitation, as the onlooker's fancy is gripped by all sorts of lewd thoughts, evil whisperings and false hopes.<sup>12</sup>

His shock and outrage, however, seem genuine when he watches 'thousands' of young English prostitutes in ragged clothes, 'many of them not yet fifteen years old', roaming the streets of London and pestering passers-by. It irks him greatly to be told, probably by his missionary friends, that the women of his country were very badly treated compared to European women. The chief culprits are the English state and church, who do nothing to provide decent housing and education to these girls and to make them fit for legal marriage. There follows a Dickensian passage describing their misery:

How many a girl will have become pregnant right at the start of her career in the playground of prostitution, then aborted her baby for fear of poverty! Some give birth in city streets during cold winter nights since they lack shelter. Others share a single bed with another girl, a widespread practice in London, since they cannot afford their own bed or coop, and are thus uncertain they will not be infected by their bed-mate. Yes, bastards in history often turn out to be mighty warriors ... like William the Conqueror, who conquered England. But surely that which benefits the majority, when practiced equitably and economically, is more worthy of consideration and priority than that which benefits the minority, with their unrestrained and spendthrift manner of life and luxury.<sup>13</sup>

Again, it is a disgrace that in this land 'of sciences, industry, and civilization' men marry rich women solely for the purpose of increasing their wealth. So one will often see a handsome youth married to an ugly middle-aged woman, while a beautiful but poor woman will frequently remain unmarried. But even a rich woman will not be free from worries. She will need to entertain and give dinner parties and balls and employ handsome servants. If her husband is pre-occupied with politics or finance, she will be free to seclude herself and have

<sup>12</sup> For the quotation and the onlookers' reaction, see *Al-Saq*, pp. 545–6.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 593–4.

fun with anyone she pleases. Shidyah adds that, according to an English author, if one sees strong and handsome children born to the rich and mighty, it is likely that they are the result of intercourse with the servants.<sup>14</sup>

Servant girls in English mansions produce one of Shidyah's most vivid and earthy portraits of English women. The scene is set outside one of these mansions:

Imagine that you are living in a London street with its rows of houses set close one to the next. Each has a door and a doorstep. Before each are some steps or a marble staircase. Imagine, may God guide you, some forty girls with slim waists, upturned breasts, on their knees, shy, with large butts, in their prime of youth, sweet of mouth and breath, soft skinned, intensely white ...

There follows a string of a hundred or more adjectives describing the physical characteristics of these maids. They are then seen carrying with their soft hands brushes, soap and a bucket of hot water and kneeling on these steps and scraping away at the outside stairs, followed by some fifty more adjectives describing the way they move and sway and murmur and complain and sigh. Shidyah then turns to address the rich Londoners and berates them for humiliating such beauty: 'And you dare to claim that you treat your women with more respect than we treat our own?' But when and how did this dreadful practice begin? Here is Shidyah in mock-historical mode:

I daresay that some English grandee had, some three hundred and fifty years ago, employed a young and beautiful maid. His wife was ugly and became jealous so she ordered her to clean the outside stairs and steps each day in order to humiliate her in the eyes of her master, as if the heart will not cling to a poor and beautiful girl as readily as it will cling to a rich one ... this habit then spread among all your grandees until this present age of civilization and compassion towards women.<sup>15</sup>

Certain things seem also to irk him about English women such as older women exhibiting their shoulders and baring their arms and chests at dinner parties of the rich, exposing more flesh than younger women; or women in black and in mourning laughing merrily and more happy than a bride; or pretty countryside girls invading Oxford and Cambridge to try to attract the rich undergraduates.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 594–5.

<sup>15</sup> For all these quotations, *ibid.*, pp. 616–22.

There is also a passage where he contrasts the demeanour of English and French prostitutes. The English prostitute knows that she is not free so does not demand any respect from her clients, while the French prostitute offers her favours as if her clients should be grateful to obtain them. In case any of his readers are shocked by his libertinism (*mujun*), he reminds them of Dean Swift's essay on buttocks, Sterne's bawdiness and John Cleland's *Fanny*, all of these authors being 'respectable churchmen'. He also refers to his own tradition of libertinism as in the poems of Ibn al-Hajjaj and others.<sup>16</sup>

Passing finally to his more general verdicts and his tallies of the pros and cons that a traveller to England will encounter, he describes the race as generally reticent, unwilling to express feelings or emotions and considering any such expression as 'lightheaded and thoughtless'. He excoriates English food and bread as tasteless and marvels how, at English dinners, the guests normally eat before they arrive. Instructing his wife how to behave when invited to an English home, Shidyaq/Fariyaq tells her:

If you find any of their acts odd, don't ever mention it to them. Praise as much as possible their habits, moods, feelings, food, drinks, dinner parties, clothes, fingernails, whiskers, ruffled hair-dos and their habit of exposing their buttocks to the fire-place. Whatever you see of furnishings and so forth in their homes you are to express your admiration and amazement, repeating phrases like 'How beautiful!' 'How lovely!' 'How charming!' 'How sweet-smelling are your water-closets and sewers!' ... This is how foreigners here manage to win the goodwill and affection of the English. I know many who used this technique with great success.<sup>17</sup>

The juggler of words and ideas that he is will naturally not leave his readers with a sardonic and parodying portrayal of his English days. As we saw above, he often describes England as a land of science, industry and civilization, though one which tolerates the existence of misery on a vast scale. Planted here and there in his text are passages of praise such as the following:

Among their virtues is that they talk little and do much. They are great administrators and practitioners of politics. They are sober and polite ... .

16 For older women exhibiting their flesh, *ibid.*, p. 550; for women in mourning, *ibid.*, p. 612; for countryside girls, *ibid.*, p. 551; for English and French prostitutes, *ibid.*, p. 631; for Swift and the others, *ibid.*, p. 584. Ibn al-Hajjaj (d. 1001 AD) was a brilliant and scurrilous Baghdadi poet.

17 For the instructions to his wife, *ibid.*, p. 587; for English reticence and tasteless food, *ibid.*, p. 597; for guests at dinner parties, *ibid.*, p. 587.

All are equal before the law. They are fond of foreigners except for the English rabble. They pay respect to men of honour and learning and help the cause of education in foreign lands. They have charitable societies that cater to every social need. Many doctors will treat patients without charge, and they have hospitals in every corner of their land. Whoever rents a room in a house, the landlady will receive him well, treat him kindly and even serve him when sick, and will invite him to keep her company in the evening without exciting her husband's jealousy. If one of her acquaintances drops by, she will introduce her guest to them and praise him. If one arrives in their country with a letter of introduction, the addressee will do all in his power to make his visitor comfortable and be liberal with guidance and advice. With them, a letter of introduction carried by a visitor will serve to provide that visitor with a substitute father, mother, family and brothers.<sup>18</sup>

Another and much longer passage consists entirely of contrasting traits of English behaviour, set in an uninterrupted succession of sentences, and consisting of about forty or so instances of nasty, unfriendly or rude behaviour juxtaposed to acts of kindness, friendliness and generosity. This is Shidyayq/Fariyayq at his most playful, and the reader is eventually told that 'by and large, their praiseworthy traits outweigh in the scales their blameworthy traits'. There is another wink in that final judgement which seems to echo the burlesque tone of the entire work.<sup>19</sup>

### 3

Shidyayq's other account of England is in his *Unveiling the Hidden Culture of Europe*. This is a work which belongs to a register or mood radically different from his earlier *Leg over Leg*. Gone are the verbal fireworks, the strings of synonyms, the abrupt digressions and the ribaldry, lechery and playfulness of the first account. All that remains in this second account to remind us that this is the same author are the occasional flashes of wit, which are not as frequent as in the earlier account, and the constant comparisons and contrasts drawn between England, France and the author's native land.

There is therefore some reason to attempt to characterize the inspiration and style of the *Unveiling*. One might start by saying that the account as a

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 589.

<sup>19</sup> For the long passage of contrasting traits, *ibid.*, pp. 522–3; for the final verdict, *ibid.*, p. 590.

whole can be classified as a very early example of Arabic descriptive and investigative journalism. It purports to give a comprehensive and sober portrait of the geography, history, society, commerce and politics of England, is addressed to educated Arab readers and is designed to benefit or enlighten them. Shidyaq may have caught the mid-Victorian passion for statistics since his account is profusely illustrated by statistics of all kinds. There are also numerous references to his sources, including newspapers, almanacs and histories, all of which are interspersed with his own direct experiences and observations. Hovering over this account is Voltaire's *Lettres philosophiques*, which Shidyaq quotes at numerous points in his *Unveiling*. This work undoubtedly influenced the general tenor of his account and most probably inspired his close interest in specific subjects in the *Lettres*, as well as his reflections on the manners and customs of his own land.

A table of contents of the *Unveiling* might look like this. It begins with the physical geography and history of England, including agriculture, minerals and industries. It moves to class stratification, Oriental studies, crime and justice, manners of the high and the low, laudable qualities of the English, marriages, weddings, funerals, child rearing, dinner parties, English cooking, the church and the priesthood, commerce, the telegraph and other inventions, and observations of Scotland and Wales. Within these topics, however, Shidyaq will often digress, almost in the spirit of classical Arabic *Adab*, so that this attempt at a table of contents must be regarded as provisional, for he allows himself considerable freedom of movement within each subject.

Here, to begin with, is a portrait of the English village, Barley in Hertfordshire, where he first settled when he arrived in England:

It is customary in England for a small town to be located near their villages and in which is sold what is needed by way of food, drink, clothing and furniture. The peasants visit that town once a week to purchase what they need. It also happens that a person would pass by at night, blowing his horn, to announce that he was heading to that town, so that whoever wishes to purchase an item delegates him to do so, for a fee. Occasionally, travelling salesmen pushing carts pass by, selling items like coffee, tea and sugar, or else they carry samples which they later deliver to customers from their shops. Through all these diverse and very laborious means, a person acquires what he needs for sustenance. As for seafood, crabs and eels, the tastiest one can eat is what they call a lobster, but this cannot be found at all. Indeed fish is found only once every three months or so. All their fish is tasteless, except for a type they call salmon, which is tasty but not when compared to the fish of our own country. They put it on ice at



night and display it for sale by day, and it often happens that a fish has a longer life after being fished than before.

Whoever visits London and sees all these great shops, public works and riches imagines that all the English are equally rich and happy. But this is far from being the case. In fact English villagers are like the villagers of Syria, or even more wretched. Their poverty is such that they leave their children without baptism, being unable to pay the priest the required fee. In that village I encountered many unbaptized children though they are members of the established church which mandates baptism. The church does not permit burial in its graveyards to any unbaptized person, treating him instead like a suicide.

These poor wretches rarely eat meat. Most of their food is bread and cheese. The village butcher slaughters a sheep or cow only once a week and sells only half a pound or a quarter of a pound of meat at any one time. When a sheep is slaughtered, he does not skin it and cut up its meat until the following day; if it is a cow, two or three days later. If a peasant is relatively well off, he buys a piece of meat on Saturday, cooks it and eats it cold for the rest of the week. Heating food is not customary among them. They prefer to eat it cold and stale for days on end rather than heat it. When I asked the woman with whom I was lodging to heat some food that had remained from my lunch, she barely understood me even after much explaining and describing, with amazement on both sides.

In winter, a person cannot leave his house to take in some fresh air because all roads are muddy. Whole days may be spent without leaving home. One finds no horses, donkeys or mules for hire in villages—no transport except one's clogs. Throughout my stay in that ill-omened village, I had no other concern than to provide myself with means of sustenance. I would order some cotton garments from Cambridge, nuts and candy from Royston and beer from London by rail. Having eventually found this expensive, I stopped these orders and thus suffered from acute stomach aches and a weakness in my knees I never felt before.<sup>20</sup>

20 Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, *Kashf al-mukhabba 'an funun Urubba*, ed. G. Yusuf Khuri (Beirut, 2002), pp. 88–9 (hereafter *Kashf*). This and other passages from Shidyaq are adapted from extracts of his works translated in my *An Anthology of Arabic Literature* (Edinburgh, 2016). I have deliberately made these extracts long because I want the reader to savour his style and his precise observations, but also because his *Unveiling* (i.e., *Kashf*), when translated into English, will be, in my view, of considerable interest to scholars of Victorian literature and society especially as seen through Eastern eyes.

This passage is in many ways typical. Close observation of his surroundings is joined to comparisons with the peasants of Syria, a description of the unhealthy climate and diet, and his endemic anti-clericalism. To be noted also is his determination to disabuse his countrymen of the notion that England is a sort of Eldorado. The splendour of London does not extend to the wretched English countryside.

Now comes a more general description of English society and politics, the two being closely linked in Shidyaaq's view:

Before I speak of English manners and customs, I ought to begin with a brief introduction in order to set aside any ambiguity that may later appear in my account. To proceed. At this point in time, England is divided into five classes. The first class is that of princes, ministers, nobles and others of high station, to which one can add the bishops. The second are the grandees who live from their lands and possessions and not from practicing any profession, but do not have a title. The third are scholars, judges and lawyers, to which one can add churchmen and international merchants. The fourth are shopkeepers and scribes who earn their living through their professions or through money changing but without needing to beg. The fifth and largest class are craftsmen and workers, to which one can add the peasants. The customs of the first class are somewhat different from the second but between them and the last class no comparison is possible. The customs of the third and fourth classes are about equal except in rare instances. The second class aspires towards becoming the first with respect to honours and power but is linked to the other classes with respect to ethnic origins and familiarity.

Predominant among all classes is love of country and boasting of their accomplishments in industries, of their regulations and of their obedience to the law. Since the last class constitutes the great majority, they are the ones whom one can most accurately describe as Britons or English, since they have maintained their age-old customs and have not mixed with the other classes. The first trait that a foreigner notices among them is their total indifference, indeed antipathy, towards him. No one pays any heed to his neighbour and cares only for himself. Each craftsman practices his own craft throughout his life and has no ambition to learn any other. It may be argued that because of this character trait, the English state has entrenched its power, since the subjects express no objections against their rulers nor any desire to know why their masters judge or rule the way they do. This is why rebellions are very rare among them, unlike the people of France. They are the most obedient of nations to

their rulers. One can also argue that their poverty prevents them from worrying about anything other than earning their living. Whatever the case may be, their poverty is the cause of the prosperity of the state and serves to increase its wealth, saving the state the cost of maintaining a large army. And just as most Frenchmen imagine all foreigners in their country to be Spaniards, especially if dark in colour, so most Englishmen imagine all foreigners to be French, whether dark or black in colour, whether wearing a fez or a conical fool's cap. They stare at a foreigner then proceed to mock him, especially if he cannot pronounce English properly. And yet they themselves cannot pronounce it properly since most of their speech is slang and ungrammatical.<sup>21</sup>

Generalizations abound, this being, after all, the age when writers both Eastern and Western lavished long and essentialist descriptions on other peoples and societies. And yet here and elsewhere in Shidyاق's England the details are dense, the qualifiers are frequent and the generalizations are moderated. Shidyاق then enumerates at some length what he believes to be praiseworthy English customs and manners, listing such habits as high regard for individual privacy versus his countrymen's constant intrusions into each other's affairs, the encouragement of talent of any kind, their low voices, their respect of time and of appointments, and their efficient and well-ordered state and bureaucracy. Living in England during the Crimean War, he marvels at the fact that the war hardly had any impact on daily life.<sup>22</sup> He proceeds in the same vein:

Among their praiseworthy manners is their lack of fanatic zeal where women are concerned. If a husband is absent then returns home to find a man conversing with his wife, he will not club her or give her a tongue-lashing before he ascertains the reason for the man's visit. However, if he discovers that she is unfaithful, he shows no mercy. A wife will often be heard to say to a guest, in her husband's presence: Take this, my dear or give me that, my dear.

Going out in the dark without a lamp is perfectly safe for one who walks or travels at night. Travelling by night is safer in England than travelling by day in our own country. You will see a boy walking the streets at night, fearing nothing. A young girl hardly ten years old will walk at midnight and passing by a policeman you would imagine her conversing with a relative. She asks the police for help or directions, and they answer her,

21 *Kashf*, pp. 121–3, excerpts.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 149–51, excerpts.

sometimes even walking with her. A policeman has no right to enter anyone's house except with permission of his department and for a serious cause. I believe that this lack of awe and fear among them, from a young age, is what grants Europeans their sense of boldness and self-assurance. In the East, fear of rulers, of the night and of religious leaders is instilled by mothers in the hearts of the young, together with fear of demons, evil spirits, ghosts and so forth.

Among other praiseworthy habits is the care the English take with what they are entrusted with. If you hand over a sheet of paper to one of them, he will return it to you years later exactly as he received it and may even remove some dirt from it and return it clean. He will then say in apology: I was bold enough to remove that stain from it and hope I have not done any wrong. Added to this is their respect for letters. No one will open a letter received by mistake but will endeavour to find the recipient and deliver it to him.

Office holders will not accept any favouritism or bribe paid by someone to advance his interests. If a person is convicted of bribery, he is treated like a thief and punished. Yes, offices here are often conferred through favouritism not merit, but this is a disease in all kingdoms. Then again, a simple soldier will never be promoted into the officer class even were he to mount atop a thousand enemy fortresses and show more courage than his own army's commander. He remains a private from the day he is inducted to the day he exits the army or life itself, whereas an officer remains an officer from the day he climbs down from his father's shoulders to the day he is carried to the grave. It is as if people are organized like the various body members: each has a function beyond which it cannot go. The head remains a head even if afflicted with senility, deafness and muteness, while the foot remains a foot even if it saves the head and the entire body besides. But the positive side of all this is that their secretary for foreign affairs, for example, has no right to interfere in any matter with the secretary for home affairs, while the speaker of parliament has no right to dictate to any seller how he sells his goods. In our country, however, a judge or bishop can dismiss a just claim simply because the claimant omitted a word while speaking. A policeman can arrest anyone he pleases. A patriarch can excommunicate any member of his community, so that no relative or fellow townsman can any longer speak to him or trade with him. To whom can we then complain?<sup>23</sup>

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23 Ibid., pp. 152–5, excerpts.

The balance, the contrasts, the qualified admiration, the attempt to explain to his countrymen European 'boldness' in an age when Europe was seriously beginning to threaten the Ottoman Empire and, finally, the *cri de coeur* at the end of the passage reveal Shidyaq in a Voltairean mode: sharp-eyed, witty, politically aware and self-reflexive.

There is much also about such matters as English children's upbringing and English marriage customs. With regards to the first theme, the following passage creates an impression of direct acquaintance with the subject and prompts his countrymen to consider other, healthier ways to raise their children:

The upbringing of children is better here than elsewhere. They wash their infants in cold water every day if they are strong or in lukewarm water if weak. Nor do they swaddle them to the point of immobility as is done in our country but merely tie them up with a sort of girth. They accustom children to eating light food with milk when they are six months old. Once a child is a year old, he will eat anything. Nor will a child defecate in his clothes or become blue-black from crying as is the case with us. But I have often seen mothers giving beer or other alcoholic drinks to their children to get them to sleep. They take them along to crowded areas and even to places where fights are breaking out. But one good aspect of their upbringing is that they address their children in normal speech, and not in lisping baby talk as is done in our country. Indeed, they will tell them tales that they cannot possibly understand, thus accustoming them from their early years to understanding. It seemed to me that English children are more intelligent and astute than our children, but the opposite is true of their adolescents. In the countryside a peasant woman brings up only her eldest child; the rest are brought up by their older siblings.<sup>24</sup>

English marriage customs, on the other hand, seem to amaze and puzzle him:

Among their marriage customs is that a girl will only marry a man equal to her in age or else two or three years older. This is a mistake. It is obvious that when a woman reaches the age of forty, she lacks the power and energy of a man of similar age, especially if she has produced many children. It is true that women here do not age quickly: a woman of thirty here looks like a woman of twenty in our country. This is also true of their men. In our country, a man of fifty is not censured for marrying a woman

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24 Ibid., pp. 175–6, excerpts.

of twenty, but this is very rare here unless there is an overpowering reason, e.g. if the man is nobler and richer than the woman and she desires to share his honour and wealth, for these two characteristics are held in greatest esteem by the English, particularly if the upbringing of children is taken into account. In this case, no objection is raised if the husband is a doddering old man since the young wife knows that her heat will soon consume his coldness, and she will then inherit his wealth. If a man proposes marriage to a woman then changes his mind for a reason other than a legal one, he is required to pay her a huge indemnity. A father can force his daughter to marry whomever he wishes provided she is below the age of adulthood, i.e. twenty-one years of age. Thereafter, he has no legal right over her. A male can contract a marriage at fourteen, a female at twelve. When a woman marries, her entire property is transferred to her husband, but she can incur a debt in his name, and he is forced to pay back her debt. A man cannot marry his deceased wife's sister. When I asked someone about the reason for this prohibition, which is not founded on communal interest, I argued thus: If this prohibition is found in the Torah, many other things are also prohibited in the Torah which Christians have declared licit. So why did you cling only to this prohibition? He answered: Communal interest dictates that a single man should not inherit two trousseaus from the same household. I said: But the poor marry without a trousseau or inheritance. He answered: Yes, but the law here is framed for the interests of the high and mighty.<sup>25</sup>

The last sentence brings us back to his fascinated interest in the high and the low, the rich and the poor, a major feature of his portrait of English society in both *Leg Over Leg* and *Unveiling*. The gulf between the aristocracy and the commoners appears unbridgeable, partly because English commoners are even worse off than the commoners of Shidyaq's native land, and partly because English aristocrats are, in his view, the descendants of the Norman conquerors, thus retaining the attitudes and snobbery of the conqueror towards the conquered.<sup>26</sup>

There are several passages in Shidyaq's *Unveiling* where he will carry his readers inside an office, a commercial company or a home where he will recount in detail what he experienced around him. The playfulness will emerge

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25 Ibid., p. 174, excerpts.

26 Ibid., p. 159, excerpts.

in such passages as the one where he describes a dinner party at the house of an English grandee:

At a dinner party, the guests are seated at the table and the lady of the house at the head. She then carves thin slices of meat and gives the plate to the maid, who places it before the guest. Even if you obtain five such slices, you will not have had your fill. Eating a lot of bread is considered by them a sign of barbarity. I dined once at the house of a grandee. Sitting at table, I took the napkin and placed it on my lap. The piece of bread was hidden in the napkin and fell off without my noticing. I was too shy to ask for another, since they thought I had become anglicized in their country. When we rose from table, I found that the piece of bread had stuck to the sole of my shoe. It was then that I recalled the story of the beggar who knocked on the door of a miser. The miser threw him a piece of bread, just like the one sticking to my shoe. The beggar took the piece of bread, pondered it, then knocked again. The miser said: We gave you, so why don't you leave? The beggar replied: You gave me this medicine but did not tell me how to use it.

If there are two or three kinds of food at table, e.g. roast beef or chicken, the lady will ask what you prefer. If you partake of one kind, your right of intercession to the other kind lapses. Only rarely will the lady offer you both kinds. Nor can she offer you anything unless she first asks your opinion of it. A guest cannot stretch forth his hand to the wine bottle to pour some in his glass, but has to wait for the waiter or lady to offer it. It pains me to say that I have often seen the host carving meat for his guests and, thinking the portion excessive, place the excess in his own plate. I would see other guests merely pretending to eat and being satisfied with a portion that a boy would barely find sufficient. Three quarters of the food would then remain uneaten. When cooked meat turns cold, they do not mind eating it for a whole week. This is why the food at the table is plentiful in proportion to the number of guests and the quantities they consume. One day I asked my landlady: Please tell me in all frankness, am I an excessive eater? No, she replied, but rather the opposite. I said: I have been invited to dinner several times and noticed that all the guests combined ate less than I did. She replied: A dinner invitation here is a mere formality, since the guests eat at home before they arrive. I was very surprised to learn this and pondered the difference with our own customs. In our country, the more the guests eat the happier is their host because he thinks they liked his food.

At the home of a grandee, a servant passes by the guests with drinks and asks what they would like to drink. They might drink beer first then a little wine. When dinner is over, the ladies retire to a side room while the men remain seated at table. It is then that drinks pass around freely. It may happen that the men remain at table drinking for an hour or two. The ladies retire to avoid the embarrassment resulting from a guest drinking too much and saying something improper.

At a large dinner party, they always begin with boiled fish. Soup is simply a broth of pepper. At such dinners, I have seen potatoes served in silverware platters, with napkins of finest linen beneath. I could not understand the reason for such an elaborate presentation of a mere potato. The humble and commonplace remains thus however presented, and a dog remains a dog even in a golden collar.

If they gather in one room then move to the dining room a man will take the arm of another man's wife and seat her at the table while the other man takes the arm of the first man's wife. If a woman remains behind unescorted this causes her embarrassment.<sup>27</sup>

As a master of Arabic grammar, style and lexicography, Shidyaq's account of his Bible translation, done in collaboration with Dr Samuel Lee of Cambridge, is an early description of the encounter with European Orientalists. He singles out for special praise the English Arabists George Sale, translator of the Qur'an, Edward Lane, translator of the *Arabian Nights* and Theodore Preston, translator of some of Hariri's *Maqamat*. But the general situation among contemporaneous English Arabists is bleak. Samuel Lee comes in for a very detailed critique for his ignorance of idiom, his stubborn refusal to allow any phrase that might even vaguely echo Qur'anic usage and his tendency to derive Arabic from Hebrew. Many of the current translations from Arabic and Persian are, in Shidyaq's view, of a very inferior quality. There are several reasons for this, but the one he singles out for special mention is that these would-be Arabists do not learn Oriental languages from native speakers. He pours scorn on John Richardson's *Arabic Grammar*, giving numerous examples of his faulty understanding of basic grammar, and finds the Arabists he encountered incapable of speaking even a few words in Arabic. In any case, Hebrew and Syriac are held in much higher esteem than Arabic: the professor of Hebrew in Cambridge has a salary of a thousand pounds a year, the professor of Arabic only seventy!<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., pp. 177–8, excerpts.

<sup>28</sup> For his collaboration with Samuel Lee on the translation of the Bible and his other



Nor is Shidyaq particularly impressed by Oxford and Cambridge, which he describes as schools for the entertainment of sons of grandees rather than as centres of serious learning:

Oxford and Cambridge are two English towns each of which contains about twenty colleges and two thousand students. Cambridge teaches geometry, mathematics and theology, while Oxford teaches literature, law, logic and philosophy, though their logic is unlike the logic of the ancients in its reasons and argumentation. Studying there is possible only with a considerable outlay of money, so only the sons of grandees and the wealthy attend these colleges, especially Oxford. There you will see a student cocking his head and strutting about as if planning to rule China or India. Most students care only for horse riding and pleasure and pay no attention to learning. When exam time comes, a student knows what subjects he will be examined on by his tutor, since these subjects are limited in number, so he endeavours to learn them. If he recites them well, he obtains a degree where it is stated that he has attained the level of mastership. Each college has endowments which support the clergymen attached to it, called 'fellows'. Some are non-clergy. Whoever achieves distinction in one science or another is entitled to a salary from the college endowment. Thus, some of them receive two hundred pounds a year, others more. But they are required to be unmarried. If they marry, they no longer receive a salary, so they only marry once they have obtained another salary from serving in a church. Each town has a collection of Arabic books, but Oxford has a larger collection, and its library contains a total of about three hundred thousand books.<sup>29</sup>

#### 4

Shidyaq's *Unveiling* is a unique portrait of England at mid-century, and the above quotations from it convey only a partial account of its riches, its style, its close and direct observations of the life around him, its ironical tone and its balance of admiration and censure. His appreciation of English inventions like the postal service and the telegraph, as well as for the dynamism of English

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observations on the English Arabists, *ibid.*, pp. 128–32 and *passim*. The French Arabists, incidentally, fare better than the English.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 134.

commerce, is unbounded, though not awe-struck. His complete immersion in English life at all social levels, the numerous anecdotes and reports of conversations, and his extensive reliance on primary and reliable English sources of information, statistical and otherwise, give his account an authenticity unmatched, in my view, by any Arabic-language travelogue to Europe up to his days and, perhaps, up to our days as well.

## Snouck Hurgronje's Consular Ambitions

*Jan Just Witkam*

When, on 29 August 1884, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje<sup>1</sup> first set foot in Jeddah, he arrived with many vague ambitions. He had acquired limited funds that would enable him to set up, in one way or another, a surveillance scheme for the Jawa, the pilgrims from the Dutch East-Indies and, in particular, the long-term residents of Mecca among them. His Dutch masters believed that he could easily undertake this task while in Jeddah, but he must have realized from the outset that doing so in Mecca would be much more effective. Indeed, every day he stayed in Jeddah he became more convinced of this. He does not write about this in his 'diary',<sup>2</sup> but his letters sent from Jeddah to his Leiden mentor Michael Jan de Goeje (1836–1909) are highly informative on this and several other aspects of his stay in Jeddah.<sup>3</sup>

At the time, Snouck Hurgronje was still in search of an income. His future was far from certain. He had a small job as a lecturer in the Leiden-based Municipal Institute for the Education of East-Indian Civil Servants,<sup>4</sup> where he taught 'Religious Laws, etc.' to first-year students. Twice a week, on Mondays and Tuesdays at 13:00 hours, he taught his subject, not always to the pleasure of

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- 1 For a short biography of Snouck Hurgronje, see my 'Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje', in *Orientalist Writers*, ed. C. Fitzpatrick and D.A. Tunstall (Detroit etc., 2012), pp. 148–54. Especially relevant to the subject is M.F. Laffan, 'The Jeddah Consulate and a Javanese Filter', in his *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia. The Umma below the Winds* (London and New York, 2003), pp. 55–62.
  - 2 See my 'Before Mecca. The Jeddah "Diary" of Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, 1884–1885', in *Scholarship in Action. Studies on Life and Work of Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje*, ed. L. Buskens, J.J. Witkam and A. van Sandwijk (Leiden, forthcoming). Snouck Hurgronje's ideas over the years about pilgrimage and the consulate can be read in *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889–1936*, ed. E. Gobée and C. Adriaanse, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1957–1965), 2: 1307–1465 and 1466–1509 respectively. A general overview of the history of the Dutch consulate in Jeddah is given by F.C. van Leeuwen, 'The Dutch Mission at Jeddah: From Pilgrimage to Trade', in *Dutch Envoys in Arabia 1880–1950. Photographic Impressions*, ed. F.C. van Leeuwen, D. Oostdam and S.A. Vink (Amsterdam, 1999), pp. 10–16.
  - 3 In 'Before Mecca', Appendix 3, I give the full text in English translation of the three letters sent by Snouck Hurgronje to De Goeje in Leiden between 8 September and 30 December 1884.
  - 4 'Gemeente-Inrichting voor de Opleiding van Oost-Indische Ambtenaren'. On this institution and its precarious existence, see C. Fasseur, *De indologen. Ambtenaren voor de Oost 1825–1950* (Amsterdam, 1994), pp. 227–232.

his students, nor possibly his own.<sup>5</sup> He sometimes worked for De Goeje's editorial projects, but indexing and correcting, or philology in general, were not Snouck Hurgronje's favourite pastimes. Nor can these activities have earned him significant sums of money, if he was paid at all, and they would certainly not lead to interesting tenure-track positions, as we now call them. His research on the Jawa in the Hijāz was his first 'real' job, but it would end as soon as the money was spent. Unsurprisingly, he remained on the look-out for career opportunities.

One such opportunity presented itself when, probably early on during his stay in Jeddah, he heard that the Dutch consul-general, Johannes Adrianus Kruyt (1841–1927), who had served in the city from 1878 till early 1885,<sup>6</sup> would leave his post and was going to be appointed in Penang. That was a strategic location, opposite Aceh, against which, from 1873 onwards, the Dutch were at war. Snouck Hurgronje lived in the building of the Dutch consulate in Jeddah and was given access to all documents by consul Kruyt:

I am staying in the consulate as pleasantly as the difficult and enervating climate permits. I have free access to the entire archive, both secret and non-secret, and to all correspondence, both past and present.<sup>7</sup>

Initially, when the news had it that consul Kruyt was going to be appointed in Penang, he thought of Pieter Nicolaas van der Chijs (1855–1889), the Dutch merchant and shipping agent in Jeddah, who was already Dutch vice-consul, as a possible successor; but it became clear that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague, or the Dutch Legation in Constantinople under whose direct competency the Jeddah consulate fell, was averse to such a plan. Then, Kruyt

5 *Almanak van het Leidsche Studentencorps voor het jaar 1885* (Leiden, [1884]). On p. 349 of the *Almanak* of 1885 is a resumé of Snouck Hurgronje's course as it was given in the previous year. The anonymous reporter somewhat despairingly expresses the wish that the different subjects not be treated in such an extensive way.

6 His closing of the 'Matriculair Register' of the Dutch consulate in Jeddah is dated 13 January 1885. From that date onwards, J.A. de Vicq was his official successor. See National Archive, The Hague, inventory 2.05.53, in No. 129. The Jeddah consulate archive, which is kept in the Dutch National Archive in The Hague, has been described by G.P. de Vries and A.W.E. Daniëls, eds., *Inventaris van het archief van het Nederlandse Consulaat te Djeddah (Turkije / Saoedi-Arabië), 1873–1930, later Nederlandse Gezantschap in Saoedi-Arabië (Djeddah), 1930–1950* (Den Haag, 1992), p. 19. On the internet <<https://brill.com/view/title/20186>> one can find the related title *The Indonesian Hajj. Part 1: The Archive of the Dutch Consulate (later Legation) at Jiddah (Jeddah), Saudi Arabia, 1872–1950* (Leiden, 2011). It seems to be a phantom title.

7 Snouck Hurgronje to De Goeje, Jeddah, 8 September 1884 (Dutch text in Leiden University Library, MS Or. 8952 B 30).

told Snouck Hurgronje that the post of consul might be something for him. Snouck Hurgronje turned to De Goeje for advice:

[Snouck Hurgronje to De Goeje, Jeddah, 11 November 1884]

After a while, I have developed a good relationship with the Dutch colony here (the most numerous among the Europeans). Especially Kruyt and Van der Chijs are excellent people, from whom I get everything that I could wish. Van der Chijs is the great European merchant, cargo and shipping agent here, and because of his practical experience he is of great service, both to me and to the consulate. What a pity that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sees no advantage in making him consul on the occasion of Kruyt's transfer in the near future. Although there appears to be a general objection to appointing anyone other than 'consuls de carrière', there seems to be, according to Kruyt, some possibility for myself, if certain people would make an effort. Frankly speaking, I would love to have a job here for a few years, because it would leave me ample time for interesting Oriental studies of the most diverse nature. From one field of knowledge one steps into the other. Commercial and shipping interests here do not need a consular appointment. Outside the months of the pilgrimage, there is little office work and *during* these months the work literally coincides with the study of Islam in the Dutch East Indies.<sup>8</sup>

De Goeje, in turn, approached a colleague, Pieter Antonie van der Lith (1844–1901), the director of the Municipal Institution in Leiden where Snouck Hurgronje was teaching (and who replaced him during his stay in Arabia). Van der Lith wrote a letter to De Goeje, who forwarded it to Snouck Hurgronje's mother in Leiden and to Snouck Hurgronje in Jeddah. In it he expressed his thoughts on why Snouck Hurgronje should try to become the new Dutch consul in Jeddah. At first sight, it seems strange that the two professors, who in Leiden lived only a few hundred metres away from one another,<sup>9</sup> would communicate in writing. Van der Lith, however, had lost his voice at that time, and writing was the only option. Normally, they would have had a long conversation, but then we would have missed Van der Lith's letter, which follows here in its entirety:

<sup>8</sup> Dutch text in Leiden University Library, MS 8952 B 30.

<sup>9</sup> Van der Lith lived at Rapenburg 61, the house that Snouck Hurgronje would purchase some forty years later and that still carries his name today. De Goeje lived at Vliet 15, having moved there from Rapenburg 55 in 1878. See C. Snouck Hurgronje, 'Michael Jan de Goeje', in *Jaarboek* (Amsterdam, 1909), pp. 107–166; 144.

[P.A. van der Lith to M.J. de Goeje, Leiden, 7 December 1884]

Dear friend,

Here is my answer to the question whether it is desirable that Snouck Hurgronje should make an effort to get the post of consul-general in Jeddah.

If Snouck Hurgronje applies for this post, it is important that we do not speak about the temporary nature that is to be given to this appointment. It will already be difficult to convince the Minister of Foreign Affairs to appoint someone as consul-general<sup>10</sup> from outside the *corps consulaire*. If it is added to that that the applicant only wishes to have an appointment for a few years, nothing will come of this, I think. The Minister should, of course, give priority to the interests of his Ministry, and these would, it seems to me, not be very much helped by a temporary consul-general. However, there is still a possibility: if there is someone in the *corps consulaire* who, after a while, were to be appointed consul-general, and who could be placed in Leiden in order to learn Arabic, Malay, etc., and who would succeed Snouck Hurgronje after his return to the Netherlands. It would depend on the discussion with the Minister whether this possibility would be subject to negotiation. If the conversation does not give an opening to this, we probably could only apply for a permanent appointment.

Such an appointment can be accepted by Snouck Hurgronje:

1° with the intention to leave that position after two or three years, once he has obtained the knowledge that he had wished to acquire about his favourite subject. The advantages of this for scholarship are conspicuous. The work as a consul-general will certainly give him ample opportunity to devote himself to his studies, whereas his position as a consul-general will enable him to acquire information that could not easily be obtained by others.

There is, however, a great risk involved in such a plan, namely that it will not work out, and that Snouck Hurgronje, once he has become a consul-general, will remain that. This is not because I fear that he will be so involved in practical matters that he will lose his desire for a scholarly

<sup>10</sup> Kruyt was consul-general but that was a personal title on the basis of his long service and proven merits. As a beginner, Snouck Hurgronje would probably not start as more than consul.

career. A man like him will not act like that. No, I realize that it can become difficult to find him a job that is as advantageous to him as the one that he gives up.

He could get back his job as a lecturer, the job that he would have left. Two considerations are relevant here. Will he be content, after having been a consul-general for a year or three, with such a modest job? In addition: the continuation of the Institution is most problematic, as you know. If it is to be closed, Snouck Hurgronje has lost his lecturership and will be forced to remain consul-general, unless, of course you could organize a chair for him at the university, and you know that I will cooperate in such a plan with all my energy. With the present mood in parliament, however, there is little chance that such a thing may happen.

It must be greatly feared therefore that Snouck Hurgronje, either by his own choice or forced by circumstances, will remain a consul-general, once he has been appointed to that post. Yet, there is still a small chance that he will come back here. In order to preserve that chance, I will be glad to stand in for him and give his courses, if, of course, the Institution remains in business. Do not worry about my health. If I must stand in for him for quite a while, I will organize it in such a way that it will not be a great effort to do so. Now that it was only for a short time, that has not even worried me. Anyway, I will take care of it.

In many ways, this solution will bring advantages that should not be underestimated. In Jeddah Snouck Hurgronje can devote himself to his studies. His place in the Institution will remain open for him, and if there is a chance to attach him to the university, his post as a consul-general will earn him great prestige. The question even presents itself to me whether there could not be a school for consuls founded in Leiden. In case our Institution is closed, Snouck Hurgronje nevertheless has a post, which certainly must be preferred over the unemployment money that would be given to him by the municipality of Leiden. It goes without saying that such a situation should not continue to exist for longer than two or three years. If Snouck Hurgronje decides then that he wishes to stay in Jeddah, you will have a pupil who could take up Snouck Hurgronje's position here permanently.

2°. Can Snouck Hurgronje take up that position *sans esprit de retour*? I would deplore that for scholarship, since, over time, his consular duties will diminish his enthusiasm for his studies. I would, therefore, prefer by far that Snouck Hurgronje, in case he gets the post of consul-general, is able to return to Leiden in two or three years, because I have stood in for

his courses in the Institution. Maybe he will not avail himself of that opportunity—which is what I think—but I hope that he will come back.

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I think it much more likely, however, that Snouck Hurgronje will *not* be appointed as consul-general. The spirit of routine and protection that is so strong in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will certainly prevent that. In that case, we will also have to exert ourselves to give him the opportunity to profit from this as much as possible. I would very much like to let him stay in Cairo for half a year. When I talked about him with Heemskerck,<sup>11</sup> he asked me why Snouck Hurgronje did not go to Egypt. I answered that the Royal Institute was now sending him to Jeddah, but that it would certainly be most desirable that he could also stay in Cairo, and I told him that, now that I saw that the minister was so interested in this, I hoped to come back to the subject. At that moment, he discretely let me understand that he was inclined to support the matter. Maybe we can achieve with him and with the Ministry of Colonial Affairs funds for Snouck Hurgronje to study in Egypt for half a year, from January to July 1886, for instance.<sup>12</sup>

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As you see, I am not uninclined to advise that Snouck Hurgronje must accept an eventual appointment, *on the condition of a plan to return*. One element is of great importance: will the Institution continue to exist or not? For several reasons, it is necessary that a decision is made about this very soon and that Mr. van Dissel<sup>13</sup> presents his proposition. In a meeting of the lecturers, I will propose that this should be done urgently. An Institution with a sword dangling over its head can never flourish. And for Snouck Hurgronje the matter is of the greatest importance. If the Institution has to close, it is always better to be consul-general in Jeddah rather

11 Jan Heemskerck Abrahamszoon (1818–1897), who in 1884 was the Dutch Minister of the Interior.

12 Except for short stopovers on his way to and from Jeddah in 1884 and 1885, and maybe in 1889 and 1906, Snouck Hurgronje never visited Egypt.

13 Not identified. He could be the teacher of Malay, J.A. van Dissel, in the Institution, but the context of his name remains unexplained.



than a redundant employee receiving unemployment aid from the city of Leiden.

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It goes without saying that you are allowed to communicate this letter to Mrs. Snouck Hurgronje and to Snouck Hurgronje himself. My voice has almost come back to me, so I will come and discuss the subject with you in the near future. Many greetings to your family.

Yours, Van der Lith  
Leiden, 7 December 1884.<sup>14</sup>

Nothing came of Van der Lith's great plans, although his fears for the survival of his moribund Institution were all too realistic. Snouck Hurgronje was never appointed consul-general in Jeddah and a school for consuls never materialized in Leiden. Paradoxically, Snouck Hurgronje's departure to the East Indies in April 1889 and his subsequent decision to stay there as a governmental adviser for Islamic and Arabian Affairs proved to be the fatal blow for Van der Lith's institution. It closed its doors in 1891.<sup>15</sup> While these unrealistic deliberations between Leiden and Jeddah were going on, a new consul for Jeddah was appointed. He was Joan Adriaan de Vicq (1857–1899),<sup>16</sup> a member of a Dutch patrician family. In 1924, his brother Nicolaas (1861–1935) was elevated to the Dutch nobility, hence the title of '*jonkheer*' (something like baronet) that is sometimes also, but incorrectly, attached to Joan Adriaan's name. Until one or two generations ago, many patricians and nobles populated the ranks of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In fact, the Snouck Hurgronje family belonged to the Dutch nobility as well, but after Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje's father had deserted his wife and his ecclesiastical community in 1849, he—and consequently all his descendants born after that year, including his son Christiaan—lost the title.<sup>17</sup> It seems unlikely, though, that this affair had any

14 Dutch text kept in Leiden University Library, MS Or. 8952 A 360.

15 Fasseur, *Indologen*, p. 231.

16 Jeddah was his first posting, Melbourne and Penang would follow. He died while in post as the Dutch consul-general in Singapore (advertisement in *Het nieuws van den dag*, 7 September 1899). For a very short survey of his consular career, see *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, ed. Gobée and Adriaanse, 2: 1469.

17 The illegitimate descendants of Snouck Hurgronje's father, Christiaan's two sisters, who bore their mother's family name De Visser, did not make it into the official genealogy. All

influence on the fact that Snouck Hurgronje was not appointed consul-general in Jeddah, but one never knows.

As could be expected, Snouck Hurgronje was disappointed about the missed opportunity and answered De Goeje:

[C. Snouck Hurgronje to M.J. de Goeje, Jeddah, 30 December 1884]

Highly esteemed friend,

Many thanks for your letter sent on 12 December,<sup>18</sup> which arrived here yesterday. More than other times, I felt, after having read what you wrote and Van der Lith's considerations, that notwithstanding steam and electricity there exists something like *distance*. How very much I would like to speak with you for an hour or so about the subjects that have arisen between us. How much could then have been clarified and how difficult such an exchange is from afar. The question of the consul has been decided since your letter. A young expert in law,<sup>19</sup> without knowledge of Arabic or Malay, nor of the Indies or Islam, will take Kruyt's task on his shoulders and will certainly spend more time than he has done so far in gaining some understanding of the complex type of commerce and shipping that is normal here and in comprehending the pilgrims, even if only through the intermediary of others. The pilgrims close up if they cannot speak *directly* with someone or when the person in question does not understand more than half a word. We will see how De Vicq fares here with his knowledge taken from a few consular reports. From now on, my address is c/o Mr. P.N. van der Chijs in Jeddah.<sup>20</sup> I have not lost hope of another chance at a later point in time, although I have to admit that Van der Lith's remark on the traditions of Foreign Affairs is completely true. The many things that I have seen in the archive of our consulate corroborate that impression.<sup>21</sup>

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present-day bearers of the name Snouck Hurgronje are 'jonkheer' or 'jonkvrouw'. See for genealogical details C.E.G. ten Houte de Lange, *Familiefonds Hurgronje 1767–1992* (Middelburg, 1992), where, in a footnote on p. 328 there is also mention of Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje's Islamic families.

18 Dutch text kept in Leiden University Library, MS Or. 8952 A 360.

19 On 3 July 1884, J.A. de Vicq defended his doctoral thesis in law, *De Donauquaestie* (Leiden).

20 When at the beginning of January 1885 Snouck Hurgronje moved to a more indigenous neighbourhood of Jeddah, he also had to do so because De Vicq was moving into the consulate's building. It was also the moment that he was going native as a preparation for his journey to Mecca, some seven weeks later.

21 Dutch text kept in Leiden University Library, MS Or. 8952 A 361.

When he wrote this letter to De Goeje, Snouck Hurgronje had already opted for another direction in his life. In mid-December 1884 it became clear to his Muslim friends in Jeddah that he had converted to Islam and that he would go to Mecca soon. The letter exudes the bitterness of a bad loser, but he had already changed his personal horizon. I am not convinced that the consulate's archive provides much evidence of the unpleasant traditions of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Van der Lith and Snouck Hurgronje so disliked. My own perusal of large parts of that archive for the period 1884–1890 does not confirm this.<sup>22</sup> Yet, even in his bitterness, Snouck Hurgronje raised a valid point, one that has never really been solved in Dutch diplomacy: that the generalist has always been preferred over the specialist. How much of a local expert should a Dutch diplomat or consul be?

Consul Kruyt employed a network of spies in Jeddah and Mecca. One of these was Yūsuf Qudṣī (Kudzi in the European archives), who is mentioned by Snouck Hurgronje in his Jeddah 'diary':

No later than the very first day, I made the acquaintance of Yūsuf Qudṣī (that is, 'from Jerusalem'), the renegade dragoman of the English consulate. He is the walking newspaper of Jeddah who seems to have little real cultivation or knowledge, but who seems to be a fund of shrewdness and have good insight into human character. This naïve and vain man, whose Islam has no deep dwelling place in his heart, nevertheless seems to enjoy considerable influence with the *Sharīf* of Mecca and the *wālī* of the Ḥijāz. He goes to Mecca on all important occasions, just as now during the *ḥajj*, especially in order to have a look at things from the English and, more generally, the European perspective, and to report back afterwards. Under normal circumstances, he visits the Dutch consulate several times a day in order to acquire new information and to offer some of the same.<sup>23</sup>

Qudṣī was more than just a walking chatterbox, however. Consul Kruyt had hired his permanent services for the Dutch consulate for the lump sum of £400, then the equivalent of 4,800 Dutch guilders, per year.<sup>24</sup> When one re-reads the passage in the diary with this knowledge, it is clear that Snouck

22 The Jeddah consulate archive in the Dutch National Archive in The Hague (described in G.P. de Vries and A.W.E. Daniëls, *Inventaris*). For the early period, however, the archive is far from complete.

23 Dutch text in Leiden University Library, MS Or. 7112, pp. 2–3. See my 'Before Mecca', forthcoming.

24 Kruyt's 'most secret' ('zeer geheim') request for permission for this expenditure was addressed to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and its draft text is preserved in the

Hurgronje is telling, at best, only half of the story. Yet, for him it is just enough to remember what the complete information was. It is another example of his strategy for excluding uninformed eyes.<sup>25</sup> Even if the money paid to Qudsī was a stiff amount, it was not enough. In fact, once one starts to gather 'useful information', there is never enough money for it. Reports of one spy must be corroborated by the reports of a second spy, and so on. Sometimes these gatherers of information would turn their mission into a private enterprise, as is shown by the infamous Meccan spy Abū Shāhīn (see below). Suspicion continues to undermine trust, especially when the number of informants increases. There is no end to it. It is evident why Kruyt had advocated with his superiors in The Hague that Snouck Hurgronje should come and monitor Mecca's Jawa population, as he may have been, at least in Kruyt's view, the ultimate trustworthy investigator.

Kruyt's successor, De Vicq, was also in search of reliable informants, and he, too, may have made use of Qudsī's services. As Snouck Hurgronje had already observed from the beginning, however, Qudsī was a vain man, who served more than one master. Was he perhaps more loyal to the English, his principal employers, than to the Dutch, for whom he was only moonlighting? Did he have more clients to whom he sold his information? Kruyt and De Vicq had no possibility of knowing whether or not this was the case. The dragomans employed by the consulates in Jeddah played important roles in the daily contacts with both locals and the pilgrims, and no one could be sure exactly where their loyalties were.

Between Jeddah and the Dutch East Indies, the information network comprised the Dutch consulates in Aden, Bombay, Colombo, Penang and the consulate-general in Singapore. The consuls in these posts were in constant contact with one another, by letter through the Dutch shipping companies and, increasingly, by telegraph. From the late 1880s, the Turkish authorities only permitted cipher telegrams between the Dutch Consulate in Jeddah and the Dutch Legation in Constantinople, as diplomatic privilege; but communications with the other consulates were manifold and efficient anyway, and cipher telegrams to the other consulates were sometimes sent from Aden.<sup>26</sup>

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secret copy book of the Dutch consulate (document No. 475 of 28 September 1882, National Archive, The Hague, inventory 2-05-53, No. 227).

25 The same strategy can be observed in Snouck Hurgronje's vague account of his circumcision, which happened on 5 January 1885; and one wonders how many more secrets can be discovered in Snouck Hurgronje's discourse when one has learned to read between the lines.

26 An example of such a cipher telegram, together with a decipherment, is in the secret 'kopieboek' of the Jeddah consulate. See Dutch consulate (annex to documents No. 558

Suspicious Indonesians were subject to surveillance and weapon shipments were monitored, even limited quantities.<sup>27</sup> The other task of the consulates, the protection of the Jawa pilgrims against the extortions of the pilgrim *Shaykhs*, received attention in the inter-consular correspondence. Especially in Singapore, Jawa pilgrims were regularly defrauded of their money and papers by self-styled pilgrim *Shaykhs*. The most important task of the consulate in Jeddah, however, was to follow the pilgrims from the time they landed in a quarantine camp near Jeddah till the very moment they left East-bound. And that is what Snouck Hurgronje would and should have seen as his main task were he appointed consul.

Reading Van der Lith and Snouck Hurgronje on the duties of the consul, it strikes one how much they underestimated these, almost considering them as sinecures in the service of scholarly research. The season of work was, of course, the period from not long before the pilgrimage till the departure of the pilgrims. The rest of the year, however, was not one long holiday: sanitary measures on the shores of the Red Sea, political information gathering, geopolitical rivalries and the constant flow of a great variety of messages from the Turkish authorities and Indonesian residents of Mecca that needed to be answered. To cite an example: a recurrent item in the Jeddah consulate archive are the letters from the Turkish governor of the Ḥijāz announcing that a certain member of the Jawa community had applied for Ottoman nationality, and asking permission for that from the consul. These requests were routinely answered with a reference to the Dutch Legation in Constantinople, which had exclusive competence in such matters, not the consulate in Jeddah.

An interesting cross-section of the issues with which the consulate in Jeddah was confronted can be seen in parts of the Snouck Hurgronje archive in Leiden University Library. It preserves a collection of slightly over 80 letters in Arabic from some 30 different senders.<sup>28</sup> All are addressed to the Dutch consul,

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and 561 of 4 February 1883, National Archive, The Hague, inventory 2-05-53, No. 227). Another one, in the hand of P.N. van der Chijs, is document No. 847 of 19 February 1889 (National Archive, The Hague, inventory 2-05-53, No. 88). The cipher is apparently a dynamic variant of Caesarean encoding.

27 At a certain moment, an alarm was raised within the consular network about guns that were shipped in Jeddah aboard an East-bound ship. In the end, they proved to be meant as equipment for the guards of the Sultan of Deli.

28 They are kept in Or. 8952, the Snouck Hurgronje archive, under A 3, A 108a, A 474–A 476, A 480, A 730, A 844–A 848, A 849, A 1112, A 1020, D 5, D 7, D 14, D 16, D 23, D 34, D 41, D 66, D 75, D 93, D 105, D 118, D 122, D 131, D 142, D 144, D 147, D 157, D 175, D 181, D 198, and maybe more. They are all available online for users of the general catalogue on the premises of Leiden University Library. I have not perused other parts of the Snouck Hurgronje archive, Or. 18.097 for instance, on the availability of such materials. See, for a full survey of the

vice-consul or simply the Dutch consulate in Jeddah, and all date from the 1880s or early 1890s. A common feature between them is that they do not seem to have any direct relation to Snouck Hurgronje's stay in 1884–1885 in Jeddah and Mecca, yet they were probably collected at his instigation. How and when they came to Leiden I do not know. Parts of the Snouck Hurgronje archive arrived in the library in 1936, other parts much later, and in 1957 these papers were registered as Or. 8952.<sup>29</sup> Before the reorganization and digitization of that archive which took place from 2007 onwards, the little stash of documents was kept together. Now they have been dispersed over the archive. They have physically been placed in alphabetical order of the name of each sender, without cross references. Thus, the internal connection between the letters is lost; they have become isolated witnesses, but of what? I have virtually brought together again the letters as they were once preserved. That is how I have known them ever since I started working on the archive in 1975. It was probably at the prompting of Snouck Hurgronje himself that the collection was brought together. The only person who could have assisted him in obtaining the letters is Raden Aboe Bakar Djajadiningrat (1859–c. 1914),<sup>30</sup> who was employed as dragoman in the Dutch consulate in Jeddah between 1885–1911. Initially, I thought that the letters had been sent by P.N. van der Chijs to Snouck Hurgronje, but several letters postdate Van der Chijs' suicide on 2 October 1889, and therefore a process of elimination leaves Raden Aboe Bakar as the only possible source. All these letters are just small slips of paper. They must simply have been taken out from the ledgers in the consulate which are now in the Dutch National Archive in The Hague and which contain many more such documents. Sometimes, they contain no more than two lines of text, and only rarely does the number of lines exceed ten. Most are sent by pilgrim *Shaykhs*, a few by

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Snouck Hurgronje materials, the inventory compiled by Arnoud Vrolijk and others, *Snouck Hurgronje Papers. Correspondence, Archives and Photos*, which is available through the catalogue of the Leiden Library. The entire survey is also available online as: <<http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info/inventories/leiden/Vrolijk-201X-en-anderen-Snouck%20Hurgronje%20Papers.PDF>>.

29 See, for the custodial history of the Snouck Hurgronje materials, Vrolijk et al., *Snouck Hurgronje Papers*.

30 On him, see M. Laffan, 'Raden Aboe Bakar. An Introductory Note Concerning Snouck Hurgronje's Informant in Jeddah (1884–1912)', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, 155/4 (1999), 517–42; M.F. Laffan, 'Writing from the Colonial Margin. The Letters of Aboe Bakar Djajadiningrat to Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje', *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 31/91 (2003), 356–380. See also P.S. van Koningsveld, 'Conversion of European Intellectuals to Islam. The Case of Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje alias 'Abd al-Ghaffar', in *Muslims in Interwar Europe. A Transcultural Historical Perspective*, ed. B. Agai, et al. (Leiden and Boston, MA, 2016), pp. 88–104, especially pp. 95–6.

pilgrims, among whom two women, and several are from Turkish authorities, including one from the *Sharīf* of Mecca and three from the *Wālī*, the governor of the Ḥijāz.

In the bitterness of his disappointment, Snouck Hurgronje treated De Vicq, who had even made the effort to take lessons in Malay before he was sent to Arabia, unkindly and unjustly. Whoever reviews the huge correspondence that De Vicq kept going during his four years of office in Jeddah, with his numerous administrative tasks, evidenced in the Jeddah archive, cannot fail to be impressed.<sup>31</sup> A notable example are his ideas about the gathering of information about Mecca and the Meccans, having already employed Snouck Hurgronje's favourite candidate in his personal service. That was, of course, Raden Aboe Bakar Djajadiningrat. Originally from Pandeglang in Banten, West Java, he had lived in the Ḥijāz since 31 October 1873.<sup>32</sup> On 21–22 February 1885, he was Snouck Hurgronje's chosen companion to Mecca, where the latter must have been introduced by him to numerous Southeast Asian residents of the Holy City. Snouck Hurgronje had convinced consul De Vicq of his usefulness and that was, as we will see, the beginning of Raden Aboe Bakar's career in the consulates of Jeddah, and later in its dependency in Mecca, until his retirement and return home in 1911.

Snouck Hurgronje's advice to Minister Keuchenius of 1 October 1888, was not very flattering to consul De Vicq.<sup>33</sup> With the assumption that the Dutch government wished to be kept informed about Meccan affairs, he repeated that this would be far from easy and that it would be dangerous even to organize such a thing. The lack of knowledge and experience of the consul in Jeddah (De Vicq is not mentioned by name) would only cause mistake after mistake, and Snouck Hurgronje gave a few examples of this:

31 He must have been a bright young man, but, indeed, lacking the expertise that Snouck Hurgronje deemed so necessary for the job of consul in Jeddah. His independent mind speaks clearly from the 'Stellingen', the statements added to his thesis *De Donauquaestie* of 1884. Some of these 17 statements are remarkably modern and courageous, and bear witness to the author's social engagement.

32 'Matriculair register' of the Dutch Jeddah consulate, National Archive, The Hague, inventory 2.05.53, in No. 129, see De Vries and Daniëls, eds., *Inventaris*, p. 19.

33 Dutch text of the letter of Snouck Hurgronje to Minister L.W.C. Keuchenius (1822–1893) of 1 October 1888. A typewritten copy of the original letter, which is in the archive of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is preserved as Leiden University Library, MS Or. 18.097 S 64.60 (former class-mark Or. 18.097 S AA 10). This part of the Snouck Hurgronje archive contains the official advices that were *not* included in *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, ed. Gobée and Adriaanse. Another unpublished early example of such an advice is Snouck Hurgronje's letter to Minister Keuchenius of 2 July 1888 (kept in the Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

While in Mecca I have seen several examples of the consequences of ignorance, even if sincere, and I may be allowed to mention a few.

For several years, a Meccan person was connected to the Dutch consulate who would secretly gather information about what was going on in the Malay-Javanese colony in Mecca and communicate to the consul the most important details, especially about those who were travelling back to their country.<sup>34</sup> It became clear to me that this man considered his job a personal business affair. The result was that he was feared by everyone, that all concerned were afraid of his influence and that he established a profitable trade in recommendations and accusations. As a consequence, a totally unimportant indigenous person, who had travelled to Java in order to cash in a number of outstanding debts, was persecuted by the authorities for being dangerous, whereas really influential and fanatical personalities remained unobserved.

Another time there were serious allegations about the important mystical propaganda that was spread in Mecca by a certain Sulaymān Efendi.<sup>35</sup> The entirely unmotivated consequence was that the consulate denounced everybody who had been taught by that *Shaykh* as dangerous. Such mistakes spread irritation and distrust without contributing anything to the knowledge of and fight against dangerous movements.

1°. An apt consul who is well prepared for his task would be able, by personal contact with many Meccans and Dutch Indian Muhammadan residents of Mecca who from time to time come to Jeddah for a while, and without always acquiring direct information, to come to important conclusions, just by talking and listening, and that with tact and prudence. Such a person should be a trusted individual who has acquired a thorough knowledge of Arabic and Islam in the Netherlands or a skilful

34 This must have been the Abū Shāhīn, apparently a litigious personality, who is mentioned by name by De Vicq in his reply of 26 November 1888. The Snouck Hurgronje archive contains one letter by *al-Shaykh* Muḥammad Abū Shāhīn in Mecca to vice-consul P.N. van der Chijs in Jeddah, dated 21 Jumādā 11 1299 (10 May 1882, Leiden University Library, MS Or. 8952 D 5). A member of the Jawa colony named Marjān had made a petition (*arīḍa*) against Abū Shāhīn who then had countered this with a formal complaint (*ishtakaynāhu*) against Marjān. Many more documents from, or in connection with, Abū Shāhīn can be found in the archive of the Dutch consulate in Jeddah, now kept in the National Archive, The Hague, inventory No. 2.05.53.

35 See, on this Naqshbandi *Shaykh*, C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka*. II. *Aus dem heutigen Leben* (The Hague, 1889), pp. 240–243, and also pp. 285, 328, 380, 389; and C. Snouck Hurgronje, 'Een rector der Mekkaansche universiteit' of 1887, republished in *Verspreide Geschriften*, 3 (1923), 65–122, especially pp. 70–71; M.F. Laffan, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia. The umma below the winds* (London and New York, 2003), p. 129.



former Dutch East-Indian civil servant who would also know Islam in a more than superficial way. The most profitable would, of course, be if he unites both capacities in himself.

2°. One could definitely stimulate reaching this goal by appointing one or more independently minded and favourably inclined Javanese who now work as interpreters and secretaries for the consul, and who, as Muhammadans, would always have free entrance to Mecca. The English consul has, to name but one example, an indigenous interpreter and a British Indian Muhammadan medical doctor at his disposal. He is of great service for finding out what is going on in Mecca. A capable *doctor djawa* would be preferable for the Dutch consulate, as his medical work would gain him trust in many circles.<sup>36</sup>

The present Dutch consul, as soon as he was appointed, was greatly embarrassed by his inability to understand the East-Indian or Arabian persons who came to visit him. At my recommendation, he then employed a very able and obedient Javanese, the son of the former Regent of Pandeglang, in his personal service. That person enabled him to perform his tasks up to a certain level. The said Javanese is very able, though probably not sufficiently energetic, to work in the desired direction, although he has rendered inestimable services to the consulate, and there have been problematic circumstances during which he has safeguarded the dignity of the consulate on his own authority.

As long as the Dutch consuls in Jeddah are not, in practice, prepared for their singular and highly important task other than by the study for the consular exam and some office experience, and as long as they are not assisted by able East-Indian indigenous people, the utmost prudence seems to be in place for the use of information about Meccan situations that one obtains from there.<sup>37</sup>

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36 This is a reference to the Anglo-Indian doctor Abdul Razzack, who had been appointed English vice-consul in Jeddah in 1882. Gathering useful information was one of his tasks. See W.R. Roff, 'Sanitation and Security. The Imperial Powers and the Nineteenth Century Hajj', *Arabian Studies*, 6 (1982), 143–161; 148. Dr. Abdul Razzack was murdered in Jeddah on 31 May 1895. According to the Jeddah 'diary' p. [3], Snouck Hurgronje met him only once and hardly communicated with him because of the doctor's extreme deafness. In the Dutch colonial context such a medical officer was a 'dokter djawa', an indigenous (para) medic from the Dutch East Indies. See, on these medical professionals, L. Hesselink, *Healers on the Colonial Market. Native Doctors and Midwives in the Dutch East Indies* (Leiden, 2011), pp. 163–223.

37 My partial translation of the Dutch text.

The letter is full of Snouckian innuendo, and consul De Vicq saw it as his delicate task, while disagreeing with the form of Snouck Hurgronje's discourse, to make clever use of the momentum of the advice that reached him almost two months later. He diplomatically countered the anonymous attacks on his reputation, one of Snouck Hurgronje's favourite figures of speech. The paradox was that as far as the employment of a trustworthy Indonesian gatherer of Meccan information was concerned, he totally agreed with Snouck Hurgronje and had already acted on his advice by employing Raden Aboe Bakar. The consulate really needed an expert Indonesian in order to be sufficiently informed about its possibilities in the political minefield that was Jeddah. It had become a matter of funding, rather than the principle of having an able spy attached to the Jeddah consulate.

The riots in Cilegon, in Banten, West Java, which broke out in 1888, gave consul De Vicq yet another opportunity to get extra money for recruiting an informant on Meccan affairs. It was said that these riots had been organized from Mecca; but this information had been gathered in the Dutch Indies, not in Jeddah, and De Vicq had only confirmed this after the fact, as Snouck Hurgronje pointed out with contempt.<sup>38</sup> Consul De Vicq had to convince his masters in The Hague that his office could not do without this reliable expert. Therefore, while nearly at the end of his posting in Jeddah, he wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague in order to obtain extra funding, as he may have foreseen that his successor, H. Spakler, in post from the second half of 1889 onwards, would be less inclined to employ Raden Aboe Bakar from his own money.

[Consul J.A. de Vicq to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs:]

November 26, 1888

Dear Sir,

I had the honour to receive your letter of November 5, 1888, (2nd section, No. 9972/15) concerning the possibilities and the means to permanently keep the government informed about what is happening in Mecca in as much as this is of interest to the Dutch East Indies.

In his advice, a copy of which has been enclosed to your letter, Dr. Snouck Hurgronje recognizes the great difficulties and objections and drawbacks that are connected to the acquisition of reliable and somewhat complete information about the issues in which the government is interested. However, he is of the opinion that these drawbacks are mostly

<sup>38</sup> *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, ed. Gobée and Adriaanse, 2: 1470.

caused by the lesser suitability and the incomplete preparations of both my predecessors and myself to the performance of at least this part of the task that we have been ordered to do. Of course, it is difficult for me to formulate an opinion about my own suitability, or lack thereof. I have now worked for several years in the terribly unhealthy climate of Jeddah and hope to be nominated to a post in a somewhat more inhabitable place. Hence, I cannot be accused of serving my own interests when I do not agree with the ideas of Dr. Snouck Hurgronje about the performance of a better, or at least a differently prepared Dutch consul in Jeddah.

Assuming that a person could be found who satisfies the requirements of Dr. Snouck Hurgronje (which may not be so easy in view of the well-known critical nature of this scholar), someone therefore who, with a thorough knowledge of Arabic and the languages of the Indian Archipelago, has made a profound study of Islam, its institutions and its believers, and who is equipped with a delicate attitude and great suitability, on the one hand, and with a highly developed power of observation, on the other, such a person certainly could make valuable linguistic and ethnological observations and would be an appreciated collaborator of Dr. Snouck Hurgronje and other Orientalists. Although I do not take this at all lightly, this is not really the relevant question. I actually doubt that such a scholar would be able, through his intercourse and his conversations with Arabs and Dutch East-Indian pilgrims, to retrieve the information about which we speak.

Dr. Snouck Hurgronje himself has, under exceptionally favourable conditions, been able to stay for a while in Mecca and find a treasure trove of information in his confidential association with Arabs and other Muhammadans. As he puts it himself in his previously mentioned advice, he would be able to provide reliable information about the influence of Mecca on the Muhammadan movement in the Dutch East Indies and about the personalities that are involved with this. To me, it seems a pity that this information, at least as far as I know, has been withheld for so many years from the government, for which they certainly are of the highest importance. The consulate in Jeddah could have profited greatly from this and hopes to do so anyway when the second volume of *Mekka* has appeared in print.<sup>39</sup>

39 The first volume, *Mekka. Die Stadt und ihre Herren* (The Hague, 1888), had arrived at the consulate in Jeddah on 4 October 1888. The second volume, *Mekka. Aus dem heutigen Leben* (The Hague, 1889), arrived there on 27 March 1889. It is not clear when the *Bilder-Atlas zu Mekka* arrived in Jeddah, nor the other album, *Bilder aus Mekka*, which were

However, for us, who are like prisoners within the walls of Jeddah, Mecca, the centre of the Muhammadan world, is closed. Jeddah is a harbour and a place of commerce where nothing happens that is of religious and political importance. The pilgrims pass through it without living there, or just for a short while. The desired information is simply not available in Jeddah. In addition, we the Europeans stand totally outside Muhammadan society. Of course, in or outside business we come into contact with some Arabs, but one cannot speak of social intercourse or confidential association in this matter. Even those who are favourably inclined towards us will not do so as they fear that their compatriots and coreligionaries will consider them as friends of Christians. Of course, this applies as much, or even more so, to the Meccans who visit Jeddah every now and then, and also Dr. Snouck Hurgronje remarks that certainly the most expert among them, those who belong to scholarly and mystical circles and who could provide important information, are the least inclined to establish contact with the European consuls.

As a matter of fact, my French colleague, who has served twenty-five years on the Arab Desks in Algiers, and who is supposed to have at least some experience with Arabs, is not more fortunate than the English consul or me.

Because of this the Dutch consul has the least contacts with the *Shaykhs* of the so-called Jawa pilgrims and their *wakīls* or agents in Jeddah. The latter, who almost without exception are people without any refinement and of the worst sort, do not need to be considered at all. The *Shaykhs*, for the most part, are only concerned about the sums of money that they can make off the pilgrims rather than having any care for religious or political propaganda. Of the approximately two hundred *Shaykhs*, only a few (I think three or four) are scholars. It is remarkable, as I just now happen to think of it, that the best known of these, *Shaykh* Nawawī, who has a good reputation with the Meccan *ulama*, has never even visited Jeddah during the four years that I have lived here. He is committed, like the others of his class, to Mecca because of his teaching, and, in fact, he has no business here in Jeddah.<sup>40</sup>

Even if the *Shaykhs* are better and, in fact, capable of providing the desired information, one should never forget that the consul, who must

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published in 1888 and 1889 respectively. One may assume that Snouck Hurgronje sent them before his own departure to the Dutch East-Indies, in April 1889.

<sup>40</sup> *Shaykh* Muḥammad Nawawī had a permit (*taqrīr*) to act as a pilgrim *Shaykh*, but he was not himself active as such. See Snouck Hurgronje's Jeddah 'diary', Leiden University Library, MS Or. 7112, p. 46; see my translation of the 'diary' in 'Before Mecca', forthcoming.

oppose their swindles as much as possible, more or less remains the enemy to them, and the contacts with the *Shaykhs*, which often take place because of complaints that have been lodged against them, are not always of an amicable nature.

Many of the *Shaykhs*, the majority of whom are very religious, would certainly not refuse to act as spies in Mecca on behalf of the consulate. However, the experience with a certain *Shaykh* Abū Shāhīn, the Arab mentioned by Dr. Snouck Hurgronje, who was used by my predecessor as such and who grossly abused his connection with the consulate, has taught us how little the information acquired in this way is to be relied on. As to the direct acquisition of information from the Dutch Indian pilgrims themselves, it seems to me that the consul is not the most suitable person. Firstly, because the pilgrims do not spend their time in Jeddah, but in the holy places. They come to Jeddah on arrival and departure, for a few days only. The consul is then very busy with hearing and acting on their complaints, etc., etc. In the meantime, I have made as much effort as possible to personally get in contact with the pilgrims and to become informed about their views and opinions. It goes without saying that the ill-disposed towards us among them will not take the consul into their trust, but also those who are kindly disposed towards us see in him too much a representative of the government and will not be tempted to give confidential information. They are for the most part very outspoken about the swindles from which they have suffered in Mecca, about the safety situation in the Ḥijāz and the like, and then they draw parallels between the Turkish and the Dutch Indian governments, which are quite flattering for the latter. No one will attach more value to this information than they deserve to have. This is the spirit, however, in which most indigent people from the Dutch East Indies think they should communicate with the consul.

I have tried to explain the reasons why not even the consul could acquire information by his own observation, which can be relevant to the Dutch government. In order to remain informed about what is happening in Mecca, he needs suitable persons, who, either because they live in Mecca or are sent there as often as possible, have access to the circles that are put under surveillance and who report about their experiences to the consulate.

As governments and officials in European countries, who cannot be blamed for ignorance of the language and the people, need their agents in order to become acquainted with whatever happens in secret political and other societies, this is the more applicable in a city such as Mecca,

which is inaccessible and in a country where one is almost entirely outside society.

In the meantime, it is far from easy, as follows from what I just have written, to find persons suitable for that work. The Levantine and Egyptians who in these regions are often used in the consulates as dragomans are no candidates for this, as they are not knowledgeable of the languages of the Dutch Indies. Added to that, this sort of people cannot be trusted very much. If they are clever, and hence can be used, then one can almost be assured that in a country in which pilgrims' affairs allow for so many liberties, they will get involved in all sorts of inappropriate behaviour to their own advantage.

The persons suitable for this consulate would be Javanese or Malay, who, while moving around in Mecca among their own people, could keep the consul informed about what is going on there. It goes without saying that they must be intelligent and able people who understand what is expected from them. Especially their loyalty to the government must be above any doubt, and they must be able to resist Meccan influences.

Can such people be found? According to the enclosed copy of the letter from the General Secretariat<sup>41</sup> of 26 December 1883, 'secret' N<sup>o</sup> 238<sup>a</sup>, the government of the Dutch East Indies at the time answered this question clearly in the negative. That letter was a response to a proposition of my predecessor to connect an able and trustworthy indigenous person, be he a medical doctor or not, to the consulate, precisely in order to monitor what is going on in Mecca.

Ever since, I have connected to the consulate an indigenous person who unites in himself many of the necessary characteristics. He has studied five years in Mecca, knows Arabic, is very well aware of Arabian situations, and he has many connections, especially of course in the circles of the Dutch Indian pilgrims. He is reliable and emotionally attached to the consulate. His long stay in Arabia has not had—and this is rare—a negative influence on him in this respect. Many of the members of the family of Radhen Aboe Bakr are in the service of the Dutch Indian government. One of his brothers, an assistant tax collector in Cilegon, was killed during the latest riots in Banten. His father, when still alive, used to be the Regent of Pandeglang.

As Dr. Snouck Hurgronje has remarked already, this Aboe Bakr has rendered important services to the consulate, although I am not aware of problematic circumstances during which he has safeguarded the dignity of the consulate on his own authority.

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<sup>41</sup> The name of the office of the Dutch Governor-General in Batavia.

He is, however, somewhat lacking in the energy and the initiative that are necessary to stay independently in Mecca in the required way. If one can give him certain instructions, in order to, for instance, follow a certain person, he will acquit himself satisfactorily of that task. He is less good in following up general orders, as became clear when I have sent him to Mecca in order to enquire there after the events. In addition, I cannot send him to Mecca as often as I would wish, since I need him as an interpreter of Arabic for my correspondence with the authorities.

If the present Dutch Indian government know of a person who, in addition to the numerous good qualities of R. Aboe Bakr, it would be considered very suitable if he were to be connected to this consulate. Such a person cannot presently be found here in the Ḥijāz. If the government in Batavia does not have such a person available, I would like to propose that I be authorized to charge the salary and travel expenses of Aboe Bakr to the account of the government. That would enable me to employ yet another person as dragoman and to use Aboe Bakr more especially for missions to Mecca. My idea would be that he would reside more often in Mecca than here and that he would keep me constantly informed of everything that goes on there.

With the high wages and large number of office and household personnel, and also with the somewhat substantial expenditure here, it is hardly feasible for me to further expand my personnel without compensation.

Apart from the measures that I propose here, I continue to find it of the highest importance that I receive news from the Indies in a timely way about troublesome and fanatical indigenous people. The English consulate constantly receives such communications from British India. This facilitates the surveillance to no end. In addition, the surveillance of certain such persons may lead to others. Especially the timely arrival of such messages is important. Only this month I received information about the departure from the Indies of H. Mardjoeki, who is mentioned in your letter, but who had already departed from Banten in June of this year. It is clear that such late messages often have lost much of their value.

Yours,  
dV.<sup>42</sup>

42 Dutch text in National Archive, The Hague, 'Europeesch brievenboek' Inventory consulate Jeddah 2.05.53, No. 88 (6 June 1888–30 October 1889), document 796/18 of 26 November 1888, addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague. The text in the 'brievenboek' shows numerous features of a frequently edited draft. Here I give a translation of what seems to me the final version.

Snouck Hurgronje reacted to De Vicq's arguments as usual in his highly personalized way, in terms that were quite unusual in Dutch official correspondence.<sup>43</sup> Reading his vehemently worded advice, one sometimes wonders whether these advices did not miss their purpose precisely because of the violent language in which they were couched. That this was not the case, apparently, must have been the result of Snouck Hurgronje's huge scholarly prestige.

Even if Snouck Hurgronje's direct consular ambitions lasted only briefly, a few weeks in the autumn of 1884 at most, the consulate continued to play an important role in his mind. This was more than a personal matter. Becoming a consul himself had been an illusion from the outset, but the Dutch consulate had a pivotal position in the management and surveillance of the pilgrim masses arriving from Southeast Asia every year. First from Jeddah, then from Leiden, then from Batavia, and later from Leiden again, he kept giving his opinions. At least 13 that were directly connected to the consulate in Jeddah were issued between 25 May 1889 and 27 February 1922.<sup>44</sup> Another 56 letters of advice concerned the pilgrimage.<sup>45</sup> The running refrain in these letters, at least till 1905, was the incompetence of the consuls, with the implication that able experts should man the consulate and that the requirements of the consuls should be professionalized. Between the lines, one constantly reads that the ideal person would always have been Snouck Hurgronje himself. Over time, Snouck Hurgronje's irritation focused less on the Jeddah establishment which lived off the pilgrims, the *Shaykhs*, the shipping companies, the Meccan rulers and the Turkish authorities. He let it go; it was something he could not change anyway, but he made no secret of the fact that the selection of an able consul was always on his easily irascible mind. Especially his violent attacks on the incompetence of consul C. Ch. M. Henny (in office in Jeddah between 1903–1905), who had been appointed against his advice, make astonishing reading.<sup>46</sup>

The world, however, was changing. A full generation after Snouck Hurgronje's frustrated effort to become the Dutch consul in Jeddah, new consuls and

43 *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, ed. Gobée and Adriaanse, 2: 1469–1470.

44 *Ibid.*, 2: 1466–1509. The first one, dated 1 October 1888, was not published by Gobée and Adriaanse. It is to that advice that De Vicq reacted in his long letter of 26 November 1888, to the Minister of Colonial Affairs.

45 *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, ed. Gobée and Adriaanse, 2: 1307–1465.

46 *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, ed. Gobée and Adriaanse, 2: 1395–1399, 1464–1465, 1475–1494, and many other places. Whenever consul Henny is mentioned in the *Ambtelijke Adviezen* it is with disdain and contempt. Henny had applied for the post in order to have an escape 'from sad family circumstances' which Snouck Hurgronje thought not a very convincing mission statement (*Ambtelijke Adviezen*, 2: 1475). Henny was nevertheless appointed because Snouck Hurgronje's negative advice apparently arrived too late.



new Indonesian vice-consuls were available.<sup>47</sup> When N. Scheltema was appointed (in office 1905–1911) as consul, he had at his disposal, in addition to the assistance of Raden Aboe Bakar, also that of another Indonesian. That was the remarkable August Salim (1884–1954). He was born as Mashudul Haq Salim, was then equalized with Europeans<sup>48</sup> as August Salim and was later known as Haji Agus Salim, under which name he had many international functions including that of Minister of Foreign Affairs in the early years of the Republik Indonesia (1947–1949).<sup>49</sup> Snouck Hurgronje, who had known him as a young man in Batavia, was very positive about him, and he proved indeed to be the ideal Indonesian in the Jeddah consulate, even though he served there only between 1906 and 1911. Several other well-educated Indonesians followed him, often in the function of vice-consul or as medical officers. There had also been changes on the Dutch side. Starting with the period of office of consul Scheltema, the Dutch consuls in Jeddah had become professionals who were very able to cope with their complex tasks,<sup>50</sup> assisted by an increasing number of qualified Indonesian staff. A vice-consulate was opened in Mecca itself, manned by Indonesian Muslims. The name of one of the vice-consuls, Snouck Hurgronje's pupil Raden Abdulkadir Widjoatmodjo (1904–1992), can be found in many documents issued from Jeddah or Mecca in the 1930s. His later career is almost the exact mirror image of that of Haji Agus Salim. After the war Abdulkadir Widjoatmodjo remained on the Dutch side and even became acting Lieutenant Governor-General of the Dutch East-Indies for a while. Soon after the Dutch withdrawal from Indonesia, he realized that there was no place for him in the Republik, and in 1951 he went into exile to The Netherlands. Another name that shows the progressing professionalism and Indonesianization of the consular staff is that of Dr Abdoel Patah (\* 1908). An alumnus of Stovia<sup>51</sup> in Batavia, he became the Legation's medical officer (1926–1933) and also directed the polyclinic and pharmacy attached to the vice-consulate in Mecca. His extensive reports on health issues in the Ḥijāz, which in the 1930s

47 See, for the history of the consulate in the first quarter of the twentieth century, Johan Eisenberger, *Indië en de bedevaart naar Mekka* (Leiden, 1928), pp. 57–74, and *passim*.

48 See, on the official racial division of Dutch East-Indian society (indigenous people, foreign Orientals [= Arabs and Chinese] and Europeans), C. Fasseur, 'Cornerstone and Stumbling Block. Racial Classification and the Late Colonial State in Indonesia', in *The Late Colonial State in Indonesia. Political and Economic Foundations of the Netherlands Indies, 1880–1942*, ed. R. Cribb (Leiden, 1994), pp. 31–56.

49 A short survey of his multiple careers in *Ambtelijke Adviezen*, 1 (1957), p. 560.

50 A complete list of consuls of Jeddah, though not very accurate for their periods of office, is given by De Vries and Daniëls, *Inventaris van het archief van het Nederlandse Consulaat te Djeddah*, p. 8. The vice-consuls, always Indonesians, do not figure in the list.

51 See Hesselink, *Healers on the Colonial Market*.

were attached to the consul's pilgrimage reports, are fascinating.<sup>52</sup> He transformed his medical reports and other observations about the health situation in Western Arabia into a doctoral thesis, which he wrote under the supervision of Snouck Hurgronje.<sup>53</sup> Through his appointment, Snouck Hurgronje's advice to Minister Keuchenius of 1 October 1888, had become reality. Later, in his thesis, Abdoel Patah would recall his personal acquaintance with Snouck Hurgronje:

I have always had a great admiration for you as the greatest expert on the psyche of the Arabs and Muhammadans. My contact with you is one of the most beautiful pages in my life, and I will always remember the hours spent in exchanges full of friendship with you in your study, the paternal advice that you gave me there and your immense interest in the subject of this thesis.<sup>54</sup>

After Snouck Hurgronje's demise on 26 June 1936, consul C. Adriaanse in his annual report on the pilgrimage devoted a few words of remembrance to the Grand Old Man. He mentioned how Snouck Hurgronje's idea that Indonesia's Muslims should in no way be hindered in the performance of their religious duty had prevailed over the resistance from colonial authorities. There was a catch, however. If the pilgrims would come back home satisfied about the treatment they had received in Arabia from the Dutch consular employees, it would increase the popularity of the Dutch administration in the colony. Finally, consul Adriaanse mentioned how Snouck Hurgronje's interest in the affairs of the Consulate in Jeddah had never flagged.<sup>55</sup>

On the Arabian side things had been moving as well. In 1902, 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Fayṣal ibn Turkī Āl Sa'ūd (c. 1875–1953) installed himself as *amīr* of the Najd, hence the celebrations, a lunar century later, of the centenary of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. After the Great War, 'Abd al-'Azīz waged two wars against the Hashemite masters of the Ḥijāz, conquered Mecca and al-Ṭā'if in 1924, and in 1930 he had himself crowned as King of the Ḥijāz and the Najd. The Dutch consulate in Jeddah was then upgraded to a Legation, headed by a *chargé d'affaires* ('zaakgelastigde'). After World War II, the Legation was headed by an envoy ('gezant'). In 1949–1950, it was handed over to the

52 The Hague, National Archive, inventory 2-05-53, box 134.

53 Abdoel Patah, *De medische zijde van de bedevaart naar Mekkah* (Leiden, 1935).

54 My translation. Dutch text in Abdoel Patah, *De medische zijde*, preamble.

55 Jeddah, Consular Archive, 'Bedevaartsverslag 1355 (1936-1937)'; pp. 30–34, dated on p. 62: 'Djeddah, Voorjaar 1938. De Zaakgelastigde,' (The Hague, NA, inventory 2.05.53, box 135).

newly recognized Republik Indonesia,<sup>56</sup> which, in view of the primary function of the consulate since its foundation in 1872, was only logical. In 1972, under the entirely changed circumstances, the Dutch once more opened a diplomatic mission in Jeddah.

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56 In this context two dates are relevant: 17 August 1945, the Proclamation of the Republik, and 27 December 1949, the formal independence of Indonesia according to an agreement between Indonesia and The Netherlands. The former date is still Indonesia's Independence Day, the latter is forgotten in both countries.



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